THE VEDANTA KESARI

JANUARY, 1965

CONTENTS

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CONTENTS

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.... Be bold and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease.
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE VEDANTA KESARI

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PANCADAŚĪ

CHAPTER II

शब्दस्पर्शौ रूपरसौ गन्धो भूतगुणा इमे । एकद्वित्रिचतुः पञ्चगुणा व्योमादिषु क्रमात् ॥ २ ॥

Śabdasparśau, sound and touch; *rūparasau,* colour and taste; *gandhaḥ,* smell; *imé* these; *bhūtaguṇāḥ,* the qualities of the elements. *Vyomādiṣu,* in the ether and others; *kramāt,* in the order of; *ekaḥ,* one; *dvi,* two; *tri,* three; *catuḥ,* four; *panca,* five; *guṇāḥ* qualities; (*vidyante,* are existent).

2. Sound, touch, colour, taste and odour — these are qualities of the elements. They are existent in the ether and the other four elements in the order of one, two, three, four and five respectively.[1]

[1] In the context of projection of the universe (*sṛṣṭi prakaraṇa*) the scripture says that ether (*ākāśa*) was born from this Ātman; from *ākāśa* was produced air (*vāyu*); from *vāyu* fire (*agni*); from *agni* water; from water (*āpaḥ*) earth (*pṛthivī*). तस्माद्वा एतस्मादात्मन आकाशः सम्भूतः । आकाशाद्वायुः । वायोरग्निः । अग्नेरापः । अद्भ्यः पृथिवी । Taittiriya Upaniṣad 2.1. These elements have one, two, three, four and five qualities, above stated in the order mentioned, i.e. *ākāśa* one : sound; *vāyu* two : sound and touch; *agni,* three : sound, touch and colour; water (*āpaḥ*) four : sound, touch, colour and taste and pṛthivī all the five.

How these qualities can be distinguished in each of the elements has been treated in the next three and a half verses.

प्रतिध्वनिर्वियच्छब्दो वायौ बीसिति शब्दनम् । अनुष्णाशीतसंस्पर्शः वह्नौ भुगुभुगुध्वनिः ॥ ६ ॥
उष्णस्पर्शः प्रभारूपं जले बुलुबुलुध्वनिः । शीतस्पर्शः शुक्लरूपं रसो माधुर्यमीरितः ॥ ४ ॥

Viyat, (in) ether; *śabdaḥ,* sound; *pratidhvaniḥ,* echo; *vāyau,* in air; *bīsiti,* the hissing (*bīs*) like; *śabdanam,* sound; *anuṣṇa,* not hot; *aśīta,* not cold; *saṁsparśaḥ,* touch; *vahnau,* in fire; *bhugubhugu,* the cackling (like bhugubhugu); *dhvaniḥ,* sound; *uṣṇaḥ,* hot; *sparśaḥ,* touch; *prabhā,* blazing; *rūpam,* colour; *jale,* in water; *bulubulu,* the rustling (like bulubulu); *dhvaniḥ,* sound; *śītaḥ,* cold; *sparśaḥ,* touch; *śuklaḥ,* clear (like crystal); *rūpaṁ,* colour; *mādhuryaṁ,* sweet; *rasaḥ,* taste; *īritaḥ,* are stated.

3. & 4. In ether (its quality) sound manifests in the form of echo ; in air there is the hissing sound (the quality of its cause, ether) and touch (its own quality) which is neither hot nor cold ; in fire there are three qualities (two of its causes and one its own), cackling sound, hot touch, and (its own quality) blazing colour ; in water there are four (three of its causes and one its own) rustling sound, cold touch, clear colour, and its own quality of taste.

भूमौ कडकडाशब्दः काठिन्यं स्पर्श इष्यते । नीलादिकं चित्ररूपं मधुराम्लादिको रसः ॥ ५ ॥
सुरभीतरगंधौ द्वौ गुणास्सम्यग्विवेचिताः ॥

Bhūmau, in the earth ; *kaḍakaḍā,* the harsh ; *śabdaḥ,* noise ; *kāṭhinyaṁ,* solidity ; *sparśa,* touch ; *nīlādikaṁ,* black and the like ; *citrarūpaṁ,* variety of colours ; *madhura,* sweet ; *āmlādikaḥ,* sour etc. ; *rasaḥ,* tastes ; *iṣyate,* are desired (present). *Dvau,* two ; *surabhi,* fragrance ; *itara,* and the other ; *gandhau,* odours ; (*santau,* are). *Guṇāḥ,* the qualities ; *samyak,* thoroughly ; *vivecitāḥ,* have been discussed.

5. & 6. In the earth (the qualities of all the previous elements and its own) are present viz., harsh sound, solidity to touch, black and other different colours, sweet, sour and other tastes, and its own two qualities fragrance and bad odour. Now, therefore, have all the qualities been thoroughly discussed.[1]

[1] It is to be understood that, because of the difference in qualities, the elements are different from one another.

NOTE : Now follows the enumeration of the sense organs, which are able to grasp these sensations, their places in the human body and their activities.

श्रोत्रं त्वक्चक्षुषी जिह्वा घ्राणं चेन्द्रियपञ्चकम् ॥ ६ ॥
कर्णादिगोळकस्थं तच्छब्दादिग्राहकं क्रमात् । सौक्ष्म्यात्कार्यानुमेयं तत्प्रायो धावेद्बहिर्मुखम् ॥ ७ ॥

Śrotraṁ, the organ of hearing ; *tvak,* the organ of touch ; *cakṣuṣī,* the organ of sight ; *jihvā,* the organ of taste ; *ghrāṇaṁ,* the organ of smell ; *ca,* and ; *indriya,* sense organ ; *pañcakam,* group of five. *Tat,* that (group of sense-organs) ; *karṇādi,* ear and other parts ; *goḷakasthaṁ,* stationed in their gross effects ; *kramāt,* respectively ; *śabdādi,* sound and the like (sensations) ; *grāhakaṁ,* (are) graspers. *Tat,* that (group of sense organs) ; *saukṣmyāt,* due to its subtlety ; *kāryānumeyaṁ* should be inferred through its effects. *Tat,* that (again) ; *prāyaḥ,* mostly ; *bahirmukham,* outward ; *dhavet,* runs.

6. & 7. The organs of hearing, touch, sight, taste, and smell are the five sense organs. They are established in their gross effects (in the body) such as ear and other parts (skin, eyes, tongue, and nose) in that order to grasp the sensations like sound etc. But these sense organs due to their subtlety[1] can be only inferred through their effects.[2] They, mostly, are (of the tendency) to run outward.[3]

[1] The sense organs are subtle because they are the effects of the non-compounded (*apancikṛta*) elements. The elements can be grasped only when they are compounded and become gross.

[2] The inference as to their existence is arrived at through the functions performed by the respective organs.

[3] 'The Lord created the sense organs defective and going outward, therefore they perceive things outside and not the Indwelling Spirit', says the *Kaṭhopaniṣad* पराञ्चिखानिव्यतृणत्स्वयम्भू तस्मात्पराङ् पश्यति नान्तरात्मन् ।*Katha.* 4.1. This is being verified every day in man's life.

THE DIVINE NAME

To CALL on God by His hallowed name is as old as religion itself. In the Rig Veda, Agni, the presiding deity of fire is hymned profusely. For it was Agni who was to carry the oblations offered into the mortal fire to the higher gods. Indra, Varuna and the like are the other names that we come across there. But Indra of the Rig Veda is not the same as of the Puranas. Indra was considered as the supreme deity, having overlordship over all the worlds. For the matter of that all names, says the Rig Veda, are of one and the same God. Those are not several gods but the same God addressed variously by different sages.[1]

"Name and form" constitute the whole phenomena of the universe. You cannot recall a form without referring to its name. And conversely also when you think of the name, the form too spontaneously comes before the mind's eye. So, as long as man is aware of these differences of 'I' and 'you', world and its objects, he must have recourse to names and forms of God also. And we have to remember that persons who are able to go beyond the idea of the phenomena are very few. People may be able to give splendid discourses on Advaita but those who have attained the *nirvikalpa samādhi* state alone can do without 'names and forms'. But it will be the height of absurdity if everyone that has a smattering of the knowledge of the scriptures thinks himself competent to tread such a path.

Again, taking the Divine Name is a wholesome method by which spiritual aspirants can turn their psychological being to good account. Man by the principle of association of ideas connects up life and actions. If by this principle man hooks his train of thoughts on to God and His blessed attributes it would be easier for him to approach God. Every day, every minute of his waking state man is engaged in this pursuit, nay even in dreams this principle works. So what is required is only a shift of the centre of attraction— from world to God.

A very high place has been given by the sages of antiquity to the Divine Name. Narada, Vyasa, Shuka, Shandilya, besides the sages mentioned in the Vedas, are some of those who laid great store on the repetition of the Lord's name. Again, it is not Hinduism alone that prescribes God's name as a means to realization. Christianity, Islam and other faiths too have the same consideration for it.

TRADITION

Taking the Divine Name as a means to God-Realization is a long-standing method. If we go into the religious history of India, or for that matter of any country, we will find that this process is time-honoured and very effective too. By repeating the Lord's name alone people have attained to the Highest. And our sages have in unequivocal terms declared this with all the firmness and certitude at their command.[2] For it has been a tried and well established practice. People for ages have put faith in these words of the sages and have enshrined the Divine Name in their hearts.

In India, particularly, the Divine Name is taken with all solemnity before the commencement of any undertaking great or small, auspicious or even otherwise. Protected by the name they feel sure of themselves in their endeavour. People have become so much accustomed and habituated to take the Name that even unconsciously they do not take a step without uttering it.

It is a great source of power armed with which a man of faith defies the world to do him any harm ; nay, he even defies death with

[1] एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति अग्निं यमं मातरिश्वानमाहुः ॥
R.V. II. iii.22.

[2] जपात् सिद्धिः जपात् सिद्धिः जपात् सिद्धिः न संशयः ।

a challenging voice, 'O Death where is thy sting?'

Sings Ramaprasad, a poet-mystic of Bengal, praising the efficacy of the *Name* :

> I have surrendered my soul at the fearless
> feet of the Mother ;
> Am I afraid of Death any more ?
> Unto the tuft of hair on my head
> Is tied the almighty mantra, Mother
> Kali's name.
> My body I have sold in the market-place
> of the world
> And with it have bought Sri Durga's
> name.
> Deep within my heart I have planted the
> name of Kali,
> The Wish-fulfilling Tree of heaven ;
> When Yama, King of Death, appears,
> To him I shall open my heart and show it
> growing there.
> I have cast out from me my six unflagging
> foes ;
> Ready am I to sail life's sea,
> Crying, "To Durga, victory!"[3]

Replete is the religious lore of India with songs that depict vividly the glories of God's name. A host of saints and sages from every part of India can be quoted in support of this. A parable is told of a crow that preferred to die of thirst but would not lose the time, it was utilizing in taking Rama's name, to slake its thirst.

Religious literature of India is full of the names of God. There are the *aṣṭottaras,* and the *sahasranāmas,* (the hundred eight and thousand names) of every name of God, to remind the aspirants about the exploits of that particular form or aspect, or Incarnation of the God-head. People there are who cannot live or breathe without taking Lord's name, without tasting its divine bliss. For the believing and the trustful their one ambition in life is to make their exit from this world with the Lord's name on their lips. To do it they retire from all worldly entanglements and cares and live in holy places like Varanasi during the later part of their lives.

[3] *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna,* p. 245. Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras-4.

God's name is very efficacious in more way than one. In the *Bhāgavata* we read o Ajāmila's episode : Ajāmila was a brahman by birth but after living for a long time the lif required of him according to his station fell o evil ways, infatuated with lust. In that conditio of his, he fell seriously ill. He despaired of hi life. He saw the messengers of Deat approaching. In his anguish he cried out to hi dearest son, who was fortunately given th Lord's name, Narayana. Now, it is said, tha the name of the Lord though unmeaningl uttered brought to the scene Vishnu's messengers who disputed the right of the messenger's of Death to take away a soul that had becom pure by the repetition of God's holy name Ajāmila was spared his life that time and wa given an opportunity to mend his ways an attain the Lord's abode. Man cuts off th bonds of birth and death if he remembers th Lord at the time of his death — is an assur ance of Sri Krishna.

The Lord's name does not go in vain. I must bear its benign result. It is like th philosopher's stone converting all baser meta into gold. It is like the magic wand of th magician performing unbelievable and un thought of miracles ; the only difference bein that in the latter case it is of a moment duration, whereas in the former it leaves permanent impress on the devotee. It trans forms man's life for ever.

Man seeks refuge in God's name also whe he is confronted with difficult situations c involved in crises. Innumerable stories ar extant which go to illustrate this fact. Whe Draupadi was being subjected to insult an humiliation in the court of the Kauravas it wa Krishna's name that saved her honour. Whe Radha, the cowherdess of Vrindavana, wa asked, as a test of her chastity, to bring wate in a multi-holed pitcher it was with the nam of the Lord that she came off more gloriou than ever, out of this fiery ordeal. The grea hero of the *Rāmāyaṇa,* whom Tulsidas call the 'jewel in the great garland of *Rāmāyaṇa* Hanuman crossed the ocean to Lanka merel by taking the name of Rama. These are no

fictitious stories, but explanations to illustrate the principles.

There is a beautiful story, told to emphasize the identity and inseparableness of the Lord and His name. Sri Krishna was once being weighed against gold and ornaments. Even when all the gold and jewels of his palace were heaped in the other pan, Krishna's pan did not move up nor was it balanced. Then Rukmini, the divine consort of Sri Krishna, had put in the place of the ornaments a *tulsi* leaf with Sri Krishna's name written on it on the counter pan to weigh the Lord. And lo ! the pan moved up and there was the Lord weighed against His own name. Such really is the potency of the Lord's Name. It has its peer only in the Lord, nothing else can compare with it.

Scriptural Injunctions

We find references as to the efficacy of the Name in the Rig, Yajur and Sama Vedas, which prove that it is not a later development in religion. One *mantra* reads : 'O, Glorious, all-pervading Lord, we use no sacrificial stakes, we slay no victims but we worship Thee by mere repetition of Thy name.'[4] The minor Upaniṣads, the *Rāmāyaṇa,* the *Gita,* and the *Mahābhārata,* and the *Bhāgavata* and other Purāṇas overflow with hymns and injunctions that enjoin this practice of taking the Name of the Lord, on the devotees. The *Yogaśikhopaniṣad* defines a *mantra* as a 'holy formula', 'because of its scope for reflection, because of its saving power, because it reveals the Lord's nature and also because it forms the Lord's abode,'[5] and thus helps to realize Him. 'Rama established by his conduct and life the path of Righteousness and the path of knowledge by His name,'[6] says the *Rāmapūrvatāpani Upaniṣad*. The *Mahābhārata* declares, 'The aspirant always repeating the name of the Lord, reflecting on its meaning and observing the vows of Brahmacharya attains the highest.'[7] Sri Krishna says in the context of His *vibhūtis,* 'Among yajñas I am the *japa* yajña.'[8] Thus we find that the recourse to the Name as one of the methods to God realization has been known from time out of mind.

In What ways can the Name be taken

The well-known forms of taking the Lord's name are many. *Mantra,* repetition of the holy formula given by a competent Guru is the most auspicious and helpful. Next comes singing hymns and songs in praise of or describing the exploits of the Lord. Sankirtana, singing in chorus the names of God, is also another method. Formal worship by offering the five, ten or sixteen articles or even mental worship (*mānasa pūja*) is still another. Here, we may remind ourselves that worship when done conscientiously, noting the meaning of all the *mudras* and rituals, which to the uninitiated and the ignorant may appear meaningless, can burst open the flood-gates of devotion and knowledge.

Examples and Precepts of Incarnations

The world has before it the shining examples of the Avatars, their apostles, sages and saints to demonstrate what the Divine Name can do. Sri Chaitanya, an ultra logician of his times even up to the day of his initiation into the name of God, was a changed man at the very first mention of the Name by the Guru. All the stored up waters of devotion flowed then onwards like a mountain torrent carrying with it all that impedes or resists its path. The entreaties of his pupils to the life of the scholar and teacher, of his mother to the life of the householder were carried away in that current. The pull of God was irresistible for him ; and in his turn his own attraction too became irresistible to many.

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[4] नकि देवा इनीमसि न क्या योपयामसि मन्त्रश्रुत्यं चतमास Sama Veda II. 2-9-2.

[5] मननात् त्राणनाच्चैव मद्रूपस्यावबोधनात् ।
मंत्रमित्युच्यते ब्रह्मन मदधिष्ठानतोऽपि वा ॥ II. 8.

[6] धर्ममार्गं चरित्रेण ज्ञानमार्गं च नामतः । I. 4.

[7] जपमावर्तयन्नित्यं जपन्वै ब्रह्मचारिकम् ।
तदर्थबुद्ध्या संयाति मनसा जापकः परम् ॥

[8] यज्ञानां जपयज्ञोऽस्मि Gita 10. 25.

Sri Ramakrishna stormed the citadel of God with nothing but the name of Mother Kali. All his other *sādhanas* may be said to have come after the first vision of the Mother. The Divine Mother could not hold Herself back from the earnest call of Her dear child. He almost forced Her to yield him Her presence. We know that Sri Ramakrishna breathed his last uttering the name of Kali and entered into *mahasamādhi*. In the life of the Holy Mother we read how incessantly she repeated the Name in spite of her varied duties of the household and onerous responsibilities of the spiritual ministry. She set for herself a huge number for her *japa*, but she did it regularly till the last days of her life. Her day dawned at 3 in the morning and her time for rest arrived only at 11 in the night, yet the repetition of the Lord's name continued unhampered.

In the disciples of Incarnations too we find this trait prominently present. A look at the life of the disciples of Sri Ramakrishna in the initial stage of the organization will amply hold out this fact. In the very throes of penury, of suffering and privacy there flowed a constant stream of divine bliss expressing itself now and then in the form of Sankirtan, songs and ecstatic dances, at the Baranagore Math.

It may now be said : 'O ! well, it is all right with the Incarnations and their apostles who were pure from their very birth or who had mighty Gurus to help and guide. But what about us who have a load of inherent tendencies to overcome ?' To this we draw attention of such people to the precepts and the assurances given by these holy men. We have to follow in their footsteps ;[9] there is no other way.[10] When we despair, observing no progress in our spiritual life, let us hearken to the words of the Avatars which bring solace and infuse confidence. Here is Sri Chaitanya telling us : 'The name of God has very great sanctity. It may not produce an immediate result, but one day it must bear fruit. It is like a seed that has been left on the cornice of a building. After many days the house crumbles and the seed falls on the earth, germinates and at last bears fruit.' Even in the case of ordinary vegetation we have to wait for the season to yield fruits and how then can we be impatient when it is concerned with the highest fruit of life !

Again, Sri Chaitanya says that it is not possible in this Kali age to do the sacrifices enjoined in the Vedas on their elaborate scale, nor is it possible for every one to do them. For the Kali age, therefore, he avers, the name of Hari alone, without any doubt, is the path for liberation.

Sri Ramakrishna confirms that by chanting the Lord's name one gets rid of all the dross of the body and mind ; and in a purified mind reflects the image of God in all splendour. One of the songs of another poet, that Sri Ramakrishna cherished very much, describes what merits accrue to one who takes the Divine name :

Why should I go to Ganga or Gaya, to
  Kasi, Kanchi, or Prabhas,
So long as I can breathe my last with
  Kali's name upon my lips ?
What need of rituals has a man, what
  need of devotions any more,
If he repeats the Mother's name at the
  three holy hours ?
Rituals may pursue him close, but never
  can they overtake him.
Charity, vows, and giving of gifts do not
  appeal to Madan's mind ;
The Blissful Mother's Lotus Feet are his
  whole prayer and sacrifice.
Who could ever have conceived the power
  Her name possesses ?
Siva Himself, the God of Gods, sings Her
  praise with His five mouths ![11]

Sri Ramakrishna gives the example of a devotee, Krishnakishore, who though a brahmin had no hesitation in drinking water from the hands of a person of low-caste when he had uttered Shiva's name. Another time Sri Ramakrishna said, 'A man was about to cross

[9] महाजना येनगता: स पन्था ।

[10] नान्य: पन्था विद्यतेऽयनाय

[11] *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, p. 76

the sea from Ceylon to India. Vibhishana said to him : "Tie this thing in a corner of your wearing-cloth, and you will cross the sea safely. You will be able to walk on the water. But be sure not to examine it, or you will sink." The man was walking easily on the water of the sea — such is the strength of faith — when, having gone part of the way, he thought, "What is this wonderful thing Vibhishana has given me, that I can walk even on the water ?" He untied the knot and found only a leaf with the name of Rama written on it. "Oh, just this !" he thought, and instantly he sank.'[12]

Sri Ramakrishna's parable of the milk-maid and the Guru is amazingly revealing as to what faith in the Name did to the disciple and how the teacher himself could not get over his doubt.

Holy Mother too in her teachings has exhorted us to be devoted to the Divine Name. In the Bible also we have certain passages glorifying Name. We shall quote a few of them here. 'Let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee' (*Psalms*, 5.11). 'Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name', (*Ib.* 29.2). 'O, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together,' (*Ib.* 34. 3-4). 'Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands : sing forth the honour of his name : make his praise glorious,' (*Ib.* 66.1-3). 'I will lift up my hands in thy name,' (*Ib.* 63.4).

However, real faith in the potency of the name can come out of one's own personal experience. We, therefore, leave it to every reader to find out the truth of this thesis by consulting his own experiences in life. Even an average man might have received a response from on High when he in his difficulty had called on Him.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 33.

How to take the Name — the Modus Operandi

It is easy to say that we should not at all discuss how we are to take the Divine Name. But the question remains whether we should take the Name to gain material ends, with ulterior motive. It cannot be gainsaid that such a step is not proper. It may lead to material prosperity, no doubt, for the Lord like a kind mother will bestow on us whatever we pray for, but it will throw us into the whirlpool of innumerable births and deaths. It is religion which comes to help us out of this predicament. And religion being the most practical of all the sciences under the sun, any practicant will find out in no time that utmost caution and guidance are required to chant the Name effectively.

When one chants it with due regard and propriety, said Swami Vivekananda once, one can have both Bhakti and Jnana through it. Again, we sing in the *Rāmanāma Sankirtan*, '*dhanyāste kṛtinaḥ pibanti satatam śrī rāmanāmāmṛtam*,' 'Blessed are those virtuous persons who drink the nectar of immortality of Sri Rama's name.' Shall we not try to become blessed !

In conclusion, we have to impress on our minds that purity of thought and sincerity of purpose are the essential conditions one has to achieve and develop in the religious life if it is to be expeditiously fruitful. He must practise Brahmacharya, physically and mentally. He has to avoid all slips in the ethical life and should live a life of discipline. These are the *sine qua non* of the higher life, and it is well-known that nothing will happen if *sādhana* is practised perfunctorily. So, when that purity of purpose and sincerity in *sādhana* is achieved and when one tries in secret and in solitude and with single-minded devotion to repeat the name of God, His vision will come and the devotee will get absorbed in Him.

THE TRIUMPHAL RETURN OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

T. M. P. MAHADEVAN

THE SHIP bringing Swami Vivekananda from the West arrived at Colombo port on January 15, 1897. As the Swami disembarked, he was greeted by a great ovation rising from the human throng covering the quays. The multitudes vied with one another to fall at his feet and touch them. The Swami was visibly moved. He was taken out in a gorgeous procession, and was presented with addresses of welcome. This was repeated at every place he visited from Colombo to Almora. And, at every place, he made powerful and impassioned appeals to his people to organize themselves, become strong, and be a nation again; he asked them to realize their own greatness and be proud of their heritage.

It was in the city of Madras, which had discovered the Swami and sent him to America, that he delivered the central message of India and disclosed his 'Plan of Campaign'. He called his people to pick up courage and rise, and realize wherein their strength lay. "My India arise! Where is your vital force? In your Immortal Soul. . . .

"Each nation, like each individual, has one theme in this life, which is its centre, the principal note round which every other note comes to form the harmony. In one nation political power is its vitality as in England. Artistic life in another and so on. In India religious life forms the centre, the keynote of the whole music of national life. If any one nation attempts to throw off its national vitality, the direction which has become its own through the transmission of centuries, that nation dies. And, therefore, if you succeed in the attempt to throw off your religion and take up either politics or society the result will be that you will become extinct. Social reform and politics has to be preached through that vitality of your religion. Every man has to make his own choice; so has every nation. We made our choice ages ago. And it is the faith in an Immortal Soul. I challenge anyone to give it up. How can you change your nature?"

"What our country now wants", declared the Swami, "are muscles of iron and nerves of steel, gigantic wills, which nothing can resist, which will accomplish their purpose in any fashion, even if it meant going down to the bottom of the ocean and meeting death face to face. That is what we want, and that can only be created, established, and strengthened, by understanding and realizing the ideal of the Advaita, that ideal of the oneness of all."

What patrioitic fervour must have been roused in the breasts of those who heard the following exhortation by the Swami may easily be imagined:

"Feel therefore, my would-be reformers, my would-be patriots! Do you feel? Do you feel that millions and millions of the descendants of gods and of sages have become next door neighbours to brutes? Do you feel that millions are starving today, and millions have been starving for ages? Do you feel that ignorance has come over the land as a dark cloud? Does it make you restless? Does it make you sleepless? Has it made you almost mad? Are you seized with that one idea of the misery of ruin, and have you forgotten all about your name, your fame, your wives, your children, your property, and even your own bodies? That is the first step to become a patriot."

The Swami explained that his plan was to start institutions in India to train young men and preachers of the truths of the Hindu scriptures in India and outside. He said that men were wanted, strong, vigorous, believing young men, sincere to the backbone. If only a hundred such would come forward, he declared, the world would be revolutionized

The execution of the plan started in right earnest after Swami Vivekananda reached Calcutta. Calcutta, like Madras, was all afire with moving enthusiasm to receive the Swami. All classes of citizens rose as one man to acclaim the returning hero. Calcutta had a special reason to be proud, for it was one of its own citizens that was now coming home as the renowned Swami Vivekananda. After the public functions were over, the Swami settled down to the solid work of organizing the institutions that would produce the type of men he wanted. He spent much time talking to young men, many of whom became his devoted followers. His brother disciples were then living in the monastery which was located at Alambazar. The Swami succeeded in converting them to his way of thinking, viz., that they should sacrifice even their personal salvation for the general welfare of all people. He impressed upon them that this was the core of their Master's teaching. They were now willing to implicitly obey the commands of their leader, go wherever he wanted them to go, and do whatever he asked them to do. To give but two examples, Swami Ramakrishnananda, who had never left the monastery for twelve years, i.e. ever since it came into existence immediately after the passing away of Sri Ramakrishna, went to Madras to organize a centre there. Swami Akhandananda went to the District of Murshidabad to take up the work of affording relief to the famine stricken people. Several young men responded to the call of Swami Vivekananda and took to the life of renunciation and service. Thus came into existence an organised order of monks dedicated to putting into effect the ideals of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda.

MEMOIRS OF SWAMI ADBHUTANANDA

(A free translation of the Bengali book, *Smritikatha*)

(Continued from the previous issue)

'ONE DAY the Master desired to take rose-apple (*jāmrul*). It was the fag-end of winter when rose-apples could not be had. The devotees searched all the markets of Calcutta but they were not available. Just see how Divine will acts! One day someone saw in a garden flowers of rose-apple and brought it to the notice of brother Śaśi. Śaśi went to that garden and procured a few rose-apples. The Master looked at them with surprise and said, "How could you get these in this season!" But the Master could not eat them....

'Once Ramababu brought the Principal of the Medical college. He examined the Master thoroughly and at last said, "It is the clergyman's throat. It is incurable." ...

'At times the Master could not take anything. Then (Holy) Mother used to clean the sore with a piece of cloth made pointed by rolling. One day as she was cleaning the sore her fingers jerked and the cloth thrust into it. At this Mother herself started, but the Master simply said, "You are cleaning it, continue." ... Mother knew, the Master was going to disincarnate. The Master had given her indications of this. He had told Mother, "When you would see anybody and everybody touching this body and see me taking food touched by one and all, then know it for certain that my time for disincarnation is not far off." Much later Mother told me an incident in which the Master and his elder brother were concerned: "His (the Master's) brother, who was then at Kamarpukur, had high fever and was delirious. Following the village custom, and in his own interest Master did not allow his brother to take water even when he was thirsty. At this his elder brother cursed him, 'You have not allowed me to take water when my throat is parched; you will see, that

no water shall go down your throat at the time of your death.' He did not allow his elder brother's words to become false." Mother in this connection also narrated the other story about the Master's encounter with his cousin, Haladhari. "One day elder cousin, Haladhari, cursed him at Dakshineswar, 'Blood shall gush out of your throat.' I have heard that some time after blood actually gushed out of his throat, its colour was deep green like the juice of kidney-bean leaves. I have seen that he never allowed the words of his relatives to be untrue even if it entailed suffering. It happens like that if one sticks to truth in all circumstances." . . . I have never seen such an intelligent woman as the Mother. When we despaired of continuing our services to him (Master) Mother would come to know of it. She would send word through brother Yogin, "Let him (an attendent) not despair. He (Master) is now a little better. The sore has opened up." Thus did Mother put courage into our hearts. . . . One day the Master called his young disciples together and said, "Look here, my boys, don't form groups. If you all remain together life will be enjoyable; if you form blocks you will come to grief." That day there were altercations, hot disputes. The Master was always in favour of debates, they sharpen intellect; but he was avowedly against wrangles producing heat and ill-feeling and ultimately parties.

'There was a terrific sound like that of a thunder the day previous to the Master's entering into *Mahāsamādhi*. Mother and Sister Lakshmi came to the Master's room when they heard the sound. Sister was evidently disturbed. At this the Master said, "You know I don't like a sad face." At that Sister Lakshmi smiled.'

Now we present to the readers Lātu Maharaj's description of the Master's Mahāsamādhi (passing away). 'Immediately before going to bed the Master used to say, "Hari Om Tat Sat". That night (the last night) also Master did the same. I was fanning him. At about 11 p.m. he heaved a deep sigh. After that he appeared to have entered *samadhi*. At that brother Naren asked all of us to sing "Hari Om Tat Sat". We started doing it; at about 1 a.m. he came out of *samādhi*, and took a little farina pudding. Brother Śaśi fed him with his own hand. Immediately after he again entered into *samādhi*. Brother Naren apprehended something. He sent for old Gopaldā. When the latter came he requested him to bring brother Rāmalāl from Dakshineswar. Gapaldā and I started at once for Dakshineswar. Rāmalāldā came with us and touching the Master's crown of the head said, "Still it is warm. You better send word to the Captain (Viśwanāth Upādhyāya). Early morning Dr. Mahindar (Mahendra Sarkar) was brought. He examined the Master's body carefully and declared life extinct. Then Upādhyāya, who was very much attached to the Master, came and asked us to rub *ghee* (butter oil) to the Master's head and the entire body. Brother Śaśi rubbed ghee on the trunk of his (Master's) body, and Vaikuṇṭha Sannyal on his legs. But there was no change. Then Mother, a picture of disconsolation, entered the room and cried out, "Ah, Mother Kali, for what fault of mine hast Thou left me." There was no end to that crying. Seeing Mother in that condition, Baburam and Brother Yogin entered the room and with the help of mother Golap, brought Mother back to her room. Meantime the news spread among the devotees of Calcutta. I have heard that teacher Akshaya and Gopal (whom the Master nicknamed "Hutko", i. e., suddenly appearing) brought the news to the devotees at Calcutta. They started coming one by one. A group photo, with the Master's lifeless body in front was taken. All these consumed enough time. And it was late in the afternoon that the Master's body on the cot, decorated with flowers, was brought to the cremation ground accompained with singing of Lord Hari's name. . . . Ramababu asked me to stay back at the garden and come to the cremation ground when Akshay babu had come. I stayed on. Mother cried but that once. Nobody heard her voice again. Oh! Her patience! I hav-

never seen such patience in any woman. . . . At night I went to the cremation ground. I saw many sitting on the bank of the Ganga, silent and motionless. Brother Śaśi, with a fan in hand, was sitting near the pyre. By his side was brother Sarot (Sarat). I took him (Śaśi) by the hand and made him stand; Sarat and Naren went on consoling him. But he spoke not a word, not a limb of his moved. . . Do you know, brother Śaśi collected his (Master's) bones and ashes in an earthen jar and brought it on his shoulders to the Cossipore garden. Brother Śaśi placed the jar exactly on the spot where the Master's cot had been.... Next day Mother Golap brought the news that Master had appeared to (Holy) Mother and consoled her saying, "Why are you so disconsolate? What has happened to me? My leaving that body is as good as going from one room to another. Here am I exactly as I was." Hearing these words of Mother Golap the doubters among us ceased sorrowing. Then all unanimously voted for continuing the Master's service as when he had been in flesh. That day brothers Niranjan, Śaśi, Old Gopal and Tārak stayed there at the garden. Myself and brother Yogin, following Mother's instruction, went to Calcutta to make proper arrangement for food offerings to the Master. At noon cooked food was offered to him; and they sang Lord's name and glory in that room. At night farina-porridge was offered and *Rama-nama* was sung. After that they all returned to their respective homes. Myself, old brother Gopal and Tārakdā stayed on there. . . . Three or four days after, Mother followed by myself, mother Golap and Sister Lakshmi, once went to Dakshineswar, and returned to the Cossipore garden before dusk. That afternoon, I heard, Ramababu and Sureshbabu came to the garden. At noon brothers Śaśi, Niranjan, Loren (Naren), Rākhāl and Bāburam also had come. Ramababu, it is said, wanted to close down the Ashrama, (i.e. disciples' residence at the garden) and asked the young disciples to go back to their homes. At this brothers Śaśi and Niranjan were extermely hurt. Their intention was to continue the Master's service there as before. That night brother Niranjan went to Balarambabu's residence. Next day Balarambabu came himself to the garden to take Mother to his house. With Mother were sent Master's clothes and other belongings to Balarambabu's house. . . . Mother went to Balarambabu's house. Myself, brothers old Gopal and Tārak continued to stay at the garden. All used to come at noon and go away in the evening. Ramababu cherished a great desire to bury the Master's urn at the Kankurgachi garden and build a Math (monastery) there. Brothers Śaśi and Niranjan did not agree to that and said "We will not part with the jar containing Master's remains." Brother Loren tried his best to make them understand the desirability of yielding to Ramababu's proposal. Said he, "Look here, brothers, should we quarrel over the jar. There is no knowing where the morrow will find us. Ramababu is willing to make a gift of the garden in the name of the Master. Should we not agree to that? We may worship Master there. To me it appears more important to mould our lives according to his ideal than to quarrel over his ashes."

'. . . The day before Sri Krishna's birthday I went to Ramababu's house, from there to the Kankurgachi garden. Next day we started early morning singing Hari's name from Ramababu's house to the garden at Kankurgachi. Brother Śaśi himself carried the jar on his shoulders to Kankurgachi. When the jar was being buried and they were putting earth over it brother Śaśi cried out, "Oh! Oh! it is hurting the Master." These words drew tears from the eyes of all present. . . When all were returning from the cremation ground [sic] Open Babu (Upendra Babu of the Basumati fame) was bitten by a snake. Nityagopal Babu (later Jnanananda Avadhuta) got that part (the bitten spot) scorched with a red-hot iron. That sore was not healed then, still he went singing *kirtan* to the Kankurgachi garden. He was very fond of keeping company with Sadhus. Carrying books under his arm for sale he used to go on foot to

Dakshineswar garden and also to Cossipore. At this the Master used to remark serio-comically, "You kill two birds with one stone — you will have the profit by selling books and also the merit of keeping company with Sadhus". . . .

'After the celebrations at Kankurgachi were over brother Ramalal arranged for a feast (in memory of the Master) at the Dakshineswar temple. The singing of Hari's name also formed a part of the programme. Brother Ramalal wanted to take Mother there on that occasion; but Mother did not go. I, however, joined in the celebration. . . .

'After the Master's passing away, although I was physically there at Cossipore it appeared all empty and desolate to me. Every now and then I would go to Ramababu's house. There also it appeared the same to me. I would go to brother Loren's house; Loren would speak many things to console me. I would say, "Brother Loren, I tell you the truth, he used to love you so much that he would not be able to live without you." Hearing this he would laugh out and say, "It is equally true in the case of all of you. Neither would he be able to live without you. You cannot guess how deep his love was for you, Śaśi, Rakhal and others. It is you people who served him really. What have I done to him? Pretty nothing." Just see his humility! One day a fellow disciple was sorrowing before me and said "He has thus left us in the lurch!" I could not bear it and said, "For the unbelievers he is dead, for the believers, however, he is as living as ever. Have you not heard he appeared and talked to Mother? If you had that amount of faith he would appear to you also.'

'. . . I heard that Balarambabu was sending Mother and Sister Lakshmi on a pilgrimage. Brothers Yogin and Kali were accompanying them. Hearing this I also felt a desire to go on a pilgrimage. Mother understood it and included me also in the company. Master Mahaśay (the author of the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*) sent his wife along with Mother, and mother Golap would not leave Mother. So through Mother's grace all of us could go on a pilgrimage. With such love she has bound us down eternally to her.'

CHAPTER XIV

In a month of the Master's passing away Mother, as narrated before, went on a pilgrimage. She was accompanied by Sister Lakshmi, Nikunja Devi (Master Mahaśay's wife), mother Golap (Mother's companion) Yogin Maharaj and Kali Maharaj, as also Latu Maharaj. The party broke their journey at Deoghar. Having seen Lord Vaidyanath (Śiva) and offered worship to Him they proceeded towards Kāśi (Vārānasi). There they stayed for three days only. They worshipped Lord Viśwanāth and Mother Annapurna, then started seeing all other temples and holy places and meeting and listening to the *sadhus* residing there. One day they went to the Ashrama of Swami Bhaskarananda, a renowned scholar-sādhu. Latu Maharaj had a long talk with him:

'Said Swami Bhaskarananda, "Don't waste your time in mere roaming about. Sit down at a place, and call on him, you are sure to get the Lord's grace. While young, I visited many holy places and kept company with many *sādhus*. On foot I went to the four important places of pilgrimage, viz., Kedar-Badari, Jagannath (Puri), Dwaraka, and Rameswara. Then there were no railways, you can well imagine what pains one had to undergo. Despite all that I got precious nothing. Ignorance and sorrow remained as dense and deep as ever. Then did I sit down here in this garden and took a vow 'May God be realized or the body drop off.' Now, you see, I have got a little of abiding Bliss." He was walking with a stick in hand and talking with me. Then his image was being worshipped in the temple. He asked, "Tell me what is going on there." I replied, "You are Nara-

yana (the Lord), you are being worshipped there." He ejaculated like an innocent child, "Grand"!

'One evening we went to attend the evening prayer at the Viśwanath temple. While returning, Mother started walking very fast and with a heavy tread, so fast that we found it difficult to keep pace with her. Immediately after reaching the residence she lay herself down on her cot and would not talk. It is heard that she got up at midnight and sat down to meditate. In the morning mother Golap called her again and again, yet her meditation continued undisturbed.

'We stayed three days at Varanasi and then went to Ayodhya. There the party stayed for one day only and then started for Vrindavan. There Kalababu's Kunja (grove) was reserved for the party. While getting down from the train I forgot to take something which Mother observed and asked someone to take it down. At Kalababu's Kunja Mother met mother Yogin for the first time after Master's dis-incarnation, her pent-up grief welled up and in embrace they shed bitter tears.'

A few events of Sri Vrindavan residence that we have heard from Latu Maharaj's own lips we narrate below :

One day mother Golap, accompanied by us visited the Madhava temple. Someone's child had dirtied the courtyard. Without the slightest hesitation mother Golap tore a portion of the saree she was wearing and cleansed the spot with water. Just see, how eager she was to keep the temple clean and pure. While she was residing with Mother (at Baghbazar?) she used to keep equally clean Mother's room, which to her, was more than a temple. This Golap Ma, before coming to the Master, was a touch-me-notist ; all that vanished gradually at the Master's touch.

'At Vrindavan Mother, in the company of Sister Lakshmi, would retire to the bank of the Yamuna. Sometimes she would take brother Yogin and sometimes me also with her. Then brother Kali was on circum-ambulation of Vrindavan. On its completion, he, accompained by Nikunja Devi, returned to Calcutta.

'Master ordered Mother in a dream to initiate brother Yogin with a *mantra*. Before that Mother had not initiated anyone nor was she willing to do it then. But at the Master's insistence she initiated brother Yogin. . . . At Vrindavan Mother used to worship Master's photo ceremonially with flowers etc. Mother used to carry throughout this pilgrimage (and later also) a tiny round casket containing a bit of Master's remains. After worshipping his photo she used to touch this casket to her forehead and keep it back most reverentially. One day she placed it on our heads also. . . . She was very fond of hearing *Kirtan*. Accompanied by myself and Sister Lakshmi, she would, now and then, go to Bhagavanji's *ashrama* to hear the singing of Lord's name. (This Bhagavanji stayed at Ganga Mayee's *ashrama* for some time.) . . . Balarambabu's uncle also used to stay in that "grove" and would serve Vaishnavas in various ways. He used to take good care of us and would bring *prasad* for us from different temples on different days.'

The following is from the pen of Swami Siddhananda : 'At Vrindavan there was no fixed time for Lātu's meals. Moreover, he used to feed the monkeys of Vrindavan with his share of food and would come at odd hours to Mother or her companions and ask for food. This naturally annoyed them and they scolded him for that. But Mother was never annoyed with this childlike nature of his ; on the other hand she would ask sister Lakshmi and mother Golap not to chide him. She would herself sit by his side and affectionately serve him food to his satisfaction. Mother knew her favourite child very well — that he was easily piqued. He did not care for others' scolding — his importunities were with Mother only. She had asked her companions to keep Lātu's meals well-covered at a fixed place so that he might come at any time and take his meals unhampered by circumstances and that his boyish nature might not suffer inhibition.'

(To be continued)

VIVEKANANDA, A PARAGON OF PATRIOTS

R. RAMAKRISHNAN

THE VIRTUE of patriotism is inherent in every person. There does not, as the poet says, breathe a man with soul so dead, who never to himself has said, 'This is my own, my native land'. An old Sanskrit verse affirms that mother and motherland are weightier than even heaven. But in most men this quality of patriotism is a thing which comes off and on, it is just a fleeting emotion, an impulse of the moment, an urge of circumstance and situation. It is not the dominent life-motive, not a burning passion, not an all-consuming ardour. But with Swami Vivekananda it was otherwise. He was not an arm-chair patriot, occasionally singing the glories of the motherland or feeling thrilled by her achievements or shedding tears for her misfortunes. He lived and died for India.

Monk he certainly was in the main, but patriot-monk was he. And the thought of India, agony at her downfall, hopes of a bright future for her — were the things which filled him at all times and urged him to speak and act as he did. 'The very dust of India is holy to me,' 'Be proud that thou art an Indian,' — in these two utterances of his can be seen what a bright flame the patriotic element was in him. If India is today respected abroad, adored by her own children, looked up to as the possessor of world-saving wisdom, it is because of Vivekananda. It was he that put India on the world map again and made the proud West realize that India was not like ancient Greece or Egypt, Assyria or Babylonia, a land to feel interest in only for past glory, but a country though aged was yet young and virile and had a glorious future before her and that she lived on because she had, in the dispensation of Providence, always her quota to give to the world's welfare.

Knowledge is love, and knowledge is power. Vivekananda knew the motherland as very few knew her, and naturally he loved her, and he had the power to bring about her national uplift. When we say that he knew India well, we do not mean merely that he knew her history and geography well, her literature and sociology well. We mean that he knew her soul, the very stuff of which she is made, her inner impulses and deeper heart-beats. For India is not a mere geographical entity, she is a country with a personality, with a unique individuality, with a national soul, with high ideals and aspirations and noble achievements of its own. This deeper India he studied in his master, Sri Ramakrishna.

Sri Ramakrishna was the spirit of India in visible form. He was a human edition of Indian holy wisdom and a mirror of her undying glory in the spiritual field. He was the essence of ancient Indian culture, the finest flower of India's religious tree. It was at his feet that Vivekananda inherited India's spiritual legacy and became filled, in a way which enabled him to interpret India to Indians themselves and to foreigners.

Naturally, after knowing India thoroughly in the fundamentals, he dedicated himself to her service. To perfect his knowledge of Mother India he toured the motherland from end to end, literally from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin and from the Arabian Sea to the Bay of Bengal. As he travelled he studied India and came to know the nation's strong points and weaknesses. And sitting on the southernmost rock of India he went into deep meditation in which he had a vision of the purpose of India's existence, the secret of her greatness, the way in which she was to be revived from her then torpor, the glory that was to be hers in the years to come. Thus equipped splendidly by his full understanding of India and her mission, he set out to perform his life's work.

dom to the people of the West and then came back and rejuvenated India.

The first service he did to the Indian people was to make them aware of the true Indian ideals. He reminded them that the life-breath of India was spirituality, and not any materialistic end. Renunciation and Service, he showed them, were India's national ideals. Buddha, who is one of the greatest Indians, is adored because in his life we see the realization of these two ideals. Born to rule a kingdom he renounced palace and power and took up the begging bowl and put on the yellow garb of the Sannyasin ; again spurning the alternative of a self-blissful state of quiet absorption he chose to wander, carrying light to the people all over. Vivekananda urged Indians to intensify India in these two channels of Renunciation and Service and assured them that then the rest would take care of itself. For if the central nerve functions rightly the other nerves will follow suit.

Vivekananda lived at a time when India's national pulse beat very low indeed. But unlike many others who feared, that India was doomed to unimportance he, being a prophet, foresaw that India would revive and reassert herself. And as the practical reformer, he did not stop with mentioning the ideals. He shaped the organization to work out what he did in a grand original way. He advised his regiment of monks not to rest satisfied with contemplation, but to give themselves over to philanthropic service in the right spirit, i. e. service as an aspect of spiritual discipline itself. In Vivekananda's philosophy of action the demarcation between the spiritual and the secular is not at all pronounced ; done in the right spirit the so-called secular is really spiritual ; the shrine and the workshop are equally sacred.

His idea of a fully developed man was that of one who ardently meditates this hour, expounds the scriptures the next hour, carries on cultivation after that and then markets the produce like any professional trader. So the impact of his personality fell on not merely what is spiritual in the narrow sense but on every department of national existence. He went so far as to suggest to our youths that they would reach heaven sooner by playing football than by reading the Gita. He would not believe in a God who does not now wipe the widow's tear, granting salvation hereafter. He emphasized that education was no less than the manifestation of the perfection already in man. He laid stress on life-building, character-building, and assimilation of ideas. Religion to him was the core of education.

He taught that national uplift depended on the improvement of the women and the people. He saw true greatness even in the worm which does its duty silently day by day. He asked Indians to remember that the ideal of their womanhood was Sita, Savitri and Damayanti ; that the God of India was the all-renouncing Śankara, the Lord of Uma ; that the best prayer was the earnest petition to the Lord 'to take away my weakness, to take away my unmanliness and make me a man'. Strength was the core of his message to the people.

In Vivekananda's eyes, a re-awakened India was to be a source of good not merely to Indians but to the whole world. India, he knew, had never lived for herself alone, had never sought only her good. *Lokakalyāṇa*, the good of the world, had ever been her goal. Vivekananda proudly pointed out that in India alone live the only people in the world who never went beyond their frontiers to conquer other races ; on the other hand India has been exporting, to other lands 'visions of the Supreme'. The secret of India's existence is in her gift of spirituality, to the world. 'The only condition of awakened and vigorous national life is the conquest of the world by Indian thought,' he affirmed, and he himself was a shining example of this conquest. His nationalism, it will thus be seen, was the broadest type of internationalism. "We must go out ; we must conquer the world," he said, "through our spirituality and philosophy. There is no other alternative, we must do it or die."

To what extent the patriotic feeling raged in Vivekananda will be clear from a few inci-

dents of his life. When on the platform of the Parliament of Religions he achieved world fame, he spent a sleepless night thinking over the miserable plight of the Indian masses. When somebody asked him how one could be of help to India he simply answered, "Love India". And when a visitor who came to see him listened to the Swami's talk, all of which was about India's economic uplift, and then moaned that the day's talk had been in vain, because it was not a treat on spiritual matters, the Swami burst out saying that so long as a dog of his country was without food, to feed him and take care of him was his religion, everything else being false religion or non-religion. Always and in every way India was the queen of Vivekananda's heart's adoration.

DISCRIMINATION

SWAMI GNANESWARANANDA

To discriminate, to distinguish, the Self from the non-Self—that is the theme of monism as interpreted by Śankaracharya. The Self and the non-Self have to be distinguished. What sort of monism is that, you ask? Therein lies the distinction between the philosophy of Śankaracharya and that of Gauḍapāda, his grandteacher. Śankaracharya *assumes* the existence of the non-Self. Under the influence of Māyā we are bound to see duality. It can be summed up under two categories, the 'I' and the 'not I'. Under the 'not I' is included everything we know in this world of phenomena. The 'I' is the subject of the entire universe, in which all things are objects. Every phenomenon in this universe is an object. Find out the subject. That is discrimination.

Here, within the body, we should discriminate like this: I have a hand; it is *my* hand. The hand is not 'I'. I think, I make up my mind to do something. The mind is not 'I'. And so on. There is a consciousness which always remains the subject. This consciousness is the real Self and it has to be discriminated from the apparent self. That is the motive for meditation, the motive behind all disciplines and education. In fact, that is why we exist—to find out the real 'I'.

The scriptures and all the great teachers have pointed out to us repeatedly that we should not forget the existence of the higher Self but such is the power of Māyā that, although we might get a glimpse of it, again confusion sets in and things again become chaotic. Repeatedly we should concentrate on this: What is the real 'I'? We should place our consciousness on the subject, the witness. We can analyse and find out right here in this body an Entity which is the witness of the body, the mind and the faculties, and all their modifications and changing moods, and which remains unchanged in the midst of all changes.

There is a king, so to say, in this great kingdom of the body and inner faculties, and that entity sits majestically on its throne. All the faculties are empowered by the existence of that great majesty. Let us imagine that there was once a quarrel amongst the faculties. "You do not do a thing," said the legs and hands to some of the others. "And you, 'tummy' get everything nice to eat but you do not work as hard as we do. We are going to strike!" They started "sit-down" strike. After a while they all began to feel weak, trying to hold themselves apart from the others. Then a comanding voice was heard: "You, menials, you have not even the power to end your existence. It is I who hold you all in order; it is by my power that you function. You do not know me? Well, here I am. Now, suppose I say 'goodbye' to you. Just see how you will get along!" And he started to walk away. Then they realized that he existed and that without him they were nothing. His powe-

enabled them to function. Without him their existence would cease. (It is something like the presence of the big "Boss". When the workers are aware of the presence of the boss, everyone works.)

That which infuses life is something beyond these atoms. It was not caused by these atoms in combination and will not be affected by the disintegration of them. That "Something" does not work, does not even partake of the good and bad actions of the individual faculty. It empowers them all to act and is reflected differently on each of them. It has the unique power of co-ordinating and harmonizing all the functions. Our functions of speech, taste, sight, and so on, are like so many containers that hold the power of that entity. It depends upon the individual capacity of the container as to how much it can hold, but that power is infinite. A small container holds only a little. As it is expanded it can hold more. It is because of the presence of the "Something" behind, that speech is functioning here in me. Suppose that there is not much power in my speech, does that mean that there is no power behind it? No, it is due to the weakness of the container. Supernatural power is the extreme expansion, extension, of the capacity of the container. Let us try to feel more and more vividly the presence of that entity within. Through every phase of life let us try to realize that it is that power which is expressing itself. That is meditation, that is discrimination. The gist of all philisophy is to realize that "Majesty" within. It is within and without me; it is everywhere. It is harder to realize it *there,* first. It is easier to realize it *here,* within.

All the Yogas are different methods to realize that power within. In meditation we want to establish the union of the macrocosm and the microcosm. For the One, everything else exists. The only fault is to become confused in our consciousness about that. Everything that is called sin, impurity, and so forth, is nothing but the outcome of indiscrimination. Know that One, and then see if there could be any weakness or sin. Even if all the gods and goddesses appear before us, if the God in this temple within has not been realized, it will not help us to attain to the highest state. That great One within must be discovered. The method is your own. If you understand the goal clearly any method can be used to reach it. You must begin with the dualistic attitude, the Self and the non-Self. When you have become firm in the realization of the Self, by discrimination, the so-called non-Self merges into the Self, and vanishes, and you realize the state of Monism.

A senior Swami once issued a "Questionnaire" to some of us. It was like this: "Suppose you are the only person left on this earth. Everything around you is turning into vapour, yet you still remain. Feel it, and feel that what you call your body and your mind are gradually vanishing too. Think about it, meditate on that, for seven days." He was helping us to meditate. The Self has to be understood as absolutely separate from the non-Self. When that has been done, when the inner Substance, the Reality, has been realized, life becomes perfect.

Thinking of the non-Self as the Self is evil. That which is not truth is evil and it produces everything, e.g., desires, old age and misery. Do not think of your Self as the body. (By the way, that is the secret of "eternal youth". Over the Substance time has no influence.) By identifying ourselves with the non-Self we keep ourselves open to all sorts of agitations. If we could withdraw ourselves into something more subtle we could defy all our "enemies". I am reminded of a story.

A fox once said to a crocodile, "Look, human beings are great and powerful because they cultivate the land. Let us do that too." They agreed and decided to raise a crop of rice. The crocodile worked very hard; so the fox asked him which he would like to take of the harvest, the root or the top of the plant. The crocodile said, "I think I'll take the root part as my share." Next they raised sugarcane. This time the crocodile thought he would fare better if he took the top part of the plant.

Finding that both times his choice was wrong, he thought, certainly the fox has something over me! He asked the fox, "How do you do it?" The fox replied, "Oh, it is my superior wisdom that makes me the gainer." So, the crocodile's children were sent to Mr. Fox to learn wisdom. Time passed but the children did not return. Mother crocodile was anxious at the continued absence of her children. She wanted to know how they were. Father crocodile said to her, "Don't worry, dear. They are getting an education." However, the mother insisted and father crocodile went to bring his children home. He found the fox swimming in a pool nearby, but there was no sign of his children anywhere. He caught hold of the fox, and said, "Where are my children? You've killed them, you wretch! Then, I'll eat you up," and he caught hold of the fox by the leg. "Eat me up!" laughed the fox, "but you have only caught my leg. You haven't caught *me*." The crocodile thought that his belly must be the thing so he grabbed him there. The fox laughed even louder. "You fool," he said, "that's only my belly. You can't catch *me*, so how can you eat me?" The crocodile relinquished his hold and the fox swam quickly away. Father crocodile went slowly home, baffled and perplexed at the superior knowledge of Mr. Fox.

There was once a man who was captured by some cannibals. They surrounded him in anticipation of a good stew! The man took out his false teeth. Then he took off a false arm and removed his wooden leg. The cannibals were shocked. They said, "What can we do with *him?* He's just parts!" And they fled away. If we treat the parts as parts "cannibals" will be frightened away. We have made the parts behave as the whole. "Evil" is taking the parts for the whole.

The Atman is Self-effulgent. It does not depend upon any of our organs or faculties. It is distinct from the unreal.

It must become the sub-current of the consciousness, something like the consciousness of being a Mr. or Mrs. So- and- so. If we can have the constant flow in the consciousness that That is our real Self, that we *are It,* we will realize the goal. Nothing must interrupt that thought. There was a disciple of Sri Ramakrishna called Lātu Maharaj. His Master had once scolded him for sleeping when he should have been meditating and after that he resolved never to sleep again, lest he should forget that he was the Self. As a young Swami I was once attending on Lātu Maharaj in Banaras. It was a hot summer afternoon and I was fanning him. He appeared to be sound asleep and as I was rather sceptical about the story we had heard that he never slept I thought I'd leave the room for awhile. I very gradually stopped the fanning, but before I had made a move, he said, in a wide-awake voice: "Gnaneswar, where are you going?" That settled it. I never doubted him any more!

When the consciousness of our real Self flows without any foreign thought intervening, we may go about our actions and do things but the flow of that consciousness will never be disturbed. In India, there is a man at marriage feasts whose duty it is to keep the oil lamps lit. He may go about, apparently enjoying himself, but all the while he is "reflecting continuously" that the lights must be kept lit.

When a man has a toothache he may go about his business and attend to many urgent matters, but all the time his mind is on the toothache. He is "reflecting continuously" on his toothache!

In a like manner our real identity must become the sub-current of our consciousness.

Pleasure, like quicksilver, is bright and coy; we strive to grasp it with our utmost skill, still it eludes us, and it glitters still: if seized at last, compute your mighty gains; what is it, but rank poison in your veins?

—Young

A RETROSPECT AND VALUE OF THE FOUR YOGAS

(Continued from the previous issue)

BRAJ BIHARI NIGAM

From the history of the Hindu Sādhanā, that we have traced above, we conclude, first of all, that each school or system of philosophy while intellectually constructing its conception of Ultimate Reality has not missed to lay down means to attain the same. This strengthens the view that in India philosophy is for life and therefore, pre-eminently pragmatic. To know the reality is to realize it. Secondly, though in Indian thought the modern psychological conception of personality does not appear to have been advocated, yet, the conception of *mukti* or *mokṣa* is rendered meaningless if it is not perfection of personality. The attainment of *mukti* is not a negative concept. It implies a dynamic, progressive self-actualising and self-transcending personality. It involves the philosophical conception of a perfect personality. To be a Jivanmukta is an attainment. He is a type of personality whose activities and intentions are cosmic and not ego-centric. He attains freedom from pleasure and pain, success and failure. Thirdly, though each school lays emphasis on one method or the other for perfection of personality, yet, the method is comprehensive and inclusive. Generally, out of the four methods viz. Jñāna, Bhakti, Karma and psycho-physical disciplines, some method or the other has been stressed which was regarded to be logically and ontologically a confirmation of their conception of the Ultimate Reality. Fourthly, we do not find any distinct demarcation between the methods. But there is a dominant note of this fact that one method cannot suit all and at all stages of personality development. Fifthly, the dynamic personality is self-transcending, in the sense that it progresses from one level of biological, social and cosmic adjustment to another higher level.

THE DIFFERENCE IN THE FOUR YOGAS AS RESULTING FROM AN ORGANIC DEVELOPMENT

6 (B)

The four Yogas broadly anticipate four types of personality, viz. thinking, emotional, activistic and meditative types. Jñāna Yoga is suitable to thinking or philosophical type of personality ; Bhakti Yoga to the emotional ; Karma Yoga to the activistic and Rāja Yoga to the meditative. Though we cannot adequately reduce the whole humanity to these types of personality, yet for purposes of perfection, these types may be presumed to be the starting-points. Truly speaking, each personality is unique, individual and complex and to speak of a type or class of personality would be the denial of the individuality of a personality. The individuality of a person consists in his reactions to certain circumstances which are particularly his own. Even though these individual differences are there, each one in his own way attempts to go ahead on the scale of perfection. It does not, however, mean that for a thinking type of personality there is no other method of perfection except Jñāna Yoga. We have only to say that Jñāna Yoga is better suited to this type of personality, and, as personality is very complex, it may manifest itself in innumerable ways. For the total personality includes several other traits and attitudes of a person, besides the four enumerated above. The individuality of a person consists in the reactions of this predominant attitude or trait to the environment.

The predominant trait signifies likes and dislikes of a personality, and accordingly, a way of attaining perfection can also be chosen. This predominant trait or attitude creates

interest and gives speed, but the development of a personality on the basis of this predominant trait never excludes or ignores or kills the rest of the traits of the individual. There is an organic development of the total personality, e.g. a thinking type or an introvert takes to the Jñāna Yoga for perfection, then, on realisation, it will be found that a true Jñānin is also a true Bhakta and a selfless worker too at the same time. The yogas offer a method of development of the total personality and not only a part or aspect of it.

Yoga Methods and Scientific Findings

6(c)

Here a question may be asked: Is the classical exposition of the four yogas consistent with the modern scientific development? The yogas advocate a philosophy which is practical and has a bearing on life. As a matter of fact all systems and philosophies in India have a utilitarian aspect. They also speak in terms of the realization of the ideal which they intellectually construct. A view of life and of the world enables a man to regulate his way of life accordingly, and, therefore, the usefulness of any philosophy cannot easily be ignored. The yogas prepare man for the realization of the Reality conceived by him to be the ultimate. The yogas are experimental and presume an individual to be the laboratory wherein the results are not external acquisitions, but are self-manifestations. The powers are not possessions but manifestations. An individual is the store-house of immense potentialities which can be educed by education, culture and yogic practices. Thus, life and its well-being are the direct concern of the practice of the yogas. These yogas may be practised at any age, in all countries and climates. In normal human beings the practice of the yogas makes life richer and sometimes gives supernormal powers and excellences (*vibhūtis*).

Sorokin gives the name 'Amitology' to the science of moral and spiritual education and friendly relationships between persons and groups. This term may well be applied to the yogas, as they undertake to discipline the individual in such a way that he can make himself to be a good citizen of the world. The realization of the ultimate Reality or Brahman or selfless and desireless disposition of mind necessarily implies the cultivation of love, friendship and oneness with the rest of the society. Therefore, Sorokin considers the yogas as the best ego-transcending techniques or techniques for altruisation.[1] The observance of *yama* and *niyama*, the moral vows for internal and external purity, is the prerequisite for any aspirant. Therefore the yogas as amitology can adequately serve the purpose of noble education.

The yogas do not accept an individual as a dyadic creature consisting only of body and mind, but they presume the conception of a triadic being made up of body, mind and soul, or unconscious, conscious and the superconscious. Modern science accepts only the dyadic viewpoint of man and therefore, generally speaking, it does not admit in its scope the existence of God, One soul, immortality, the possibility of the achievement of *vibhūtis* and many other suppositions which are regarded as being either mystical, religious or parapsychological phenomena. The present-day scientific viewpoint claims to change the total personality of an individual by changing the environment completely. It presumes the dualistic viewpoint of relation between body and mind. In yogas we presume the Over-soul, the pure Puruṣa, the Puruṣa Viśeṣa or Brahman as the ultimate reality which is all-comprehending. Sri Aurobindo thinks that the so-called ideals of progress are more real than our mind but they are not ultimately Real, because, they are all on the plane of consciousness determined by the objective world. They are merely the aspects of the ultimate Reality and therefore nearer to It and always more real. The ultimate Reality which is of the essence of consciousness or Superconsciousness or Over-Soul, unlike the superman the world-ruler of Nietzsche, is the world-

[1] *Form and Techniques of Altruistic & Spiritual Growth*, Preface pp. vi & vii.

ruler as well as the self-ruler. The jīva or the individual with the help of the Yogas, may become one with the Over-soul or Brahman. Dr. Raju while making this idea of Sri Aurobindo explicit says :

"When once it is admitted that the jiva can become one with Brahman, it must be possible for the jiva to use its Sakti, so that he can use the power so obtained. But to get this power, one's own ego or individuality has to be surrendered. Individuality is due to limitations. To assert one's individuality, therefore, is to intensify and strengthen the limitations. But one cannot get the power of Brahman, unless one gets over the limitations. So one gets the power of Brahman at the sacrifice of one's own ego-hood and selfishness. That is why the Superman is a self-ruler. And Aurobindo believes that a race of Supermen can come into being in the course of evolution." [2]

Modern science has given to man immense power over nature, but it could not enable him to subdue himself to the same extent. The yogas are the methods and disciplines which enable him to conquer himself and thus get over the limitations imposed on him by the finite sense of his personality. It may be viewed that for conquering the external nature one should have the modern scientific disciplines ; and to subdue one's internal nature one should practise the yogic disciplines. But we should not forget that the yoga is a universal science which enables man to conquer both the internal nature and the external environment. The *vibhūtipāda* of Pātañjala yoga gives in detail the ways to conquer the external world and the fruits thereof, though, Patañjali has repeatedly warned the aspirants not to be allured and attached to these attainments, as they are impediments to liberation.

The psycho-analytical methods propounded by Freud, Breur, Adler, Jung etc. have explored the subconscious mind which is taken to be the regulator of the activities in the consciousness. Freud advocates the tripartite division of self into Id, ego and super-ego. Id is the biological self which is always in mental tension with the ego, the higher mental organization. The Super-ego which is the internalized replica of the pressure of society is the cause of mental tension. The Super-ego is the censor and the invigilator. This view of the self is based on the biological and materialistic philosophy. The psycho-analytical method is unable to comprehend the reality of the self at the reflective and transcendental or ideal dimension. It fails to do justice to the creativeness and transcendence of the self. The theories of psycho-analysis take only a partial view of the mind emphasizing a motto which is not very significant from the viewpoint of the whole personality. No doubt, for integration of some pathological personalities these methods have proved helpful, but they could not bless the sufferers with a life of joy, satisfaction and fullest self-expression. These methods have a clinical origin and a curative value. The Yoga methods have not only a clinical value, but they are efficient enough for the integration of personality. An ego, falsely developed, expects the world to give a smooth sailing and when betrayed lapses into the disintegrated personality. The yogas undertake to delimit the ego by certain physical, mental and moral activities guided by a sound philosophy of the super-consciousness. The psycho-analytical methods take the dyadic view of human beings believing that mind is formed or deformed by the body or environment. The yoga methods believe in the triadic view of man according to which both the body and the mind are partial manifestations of the Super-conscious or over-Soul or Absolute. The Super-conscious regulates both body and the mind. Physical, mental and moral disciplines are necessary for the integration of personality in which the Super-conscious is the ruling reality. It seems, therefore, that even as a clinical method, yoga can offer the best service. Dr. Bhagavandas gives to the yoga-methods the name of Psycho-synthesis as contrasted with the psycho-analytical methods of Freud, Adler and Jung.[3]

2 *Idealistic Thought of India* (1953), pp 303-4.

3 *Ancient Psycho-synthesis vs. Modern Psycho-analysis* (TPH). pub. 1949.

Yoga Discipline a Necessary Component of the Ethics of Personality

6(D)

According to the ethical view of personality, performance of right actions is the mark of a good personality. Actualization of the bio-social self is as necessary as the value-realization by a personality which is both self-actualizing and self-transcending. The present-day psychological theories explain mind and personality in terms of man and environmental transactions. They have the materialistic and biological bias. They fail to recognize the creative and the self-transcending essence of the self. Radhakamal Mukerjee has very aptly said :

> These hardly give consideration to ideal human values and potentialities, and underscore intuition and imagination, purpose and will. Above all, these do not adequately acknowledge nor explain the openness, wholeness and transcendence of the personality that are basic for human living and becoming, within society and cosmos-totality. The crux of the whole process of wholesome and harmonious adjustment of the personality is represented by an individualised hierarchy of values.[4]

The yoga methods undertake the perfection of the multi-dimensional character of the human personality and recognize the fact that no value—biological, social or spiritual—is atomic and isolated. Each value is linked with the other in an integrated or whole personality. No faculty of the mind — cognition, affection or conation—is atomic, isolated and exclusive.

[4] *The Philosophy of Personality* (Allied Publishers 1963), p. 2.

The human organism reacts to the environment as a whole personality.

Ethically speaking the realization of values, which are hierarchically self-arranged due to the self-transcending and self-creative essence of the self, is the aim of every individual. In this process of realization, pleasure and pain, profit and loss, success and failure, which are incidental to the finite sense of an individual, gradually lose their sting and the personality becomes so much integrated that a person rises above the circumstances and does his duties unflinchingly. He realizes himself as a cosmos-man, a whole personality. Gardner Murphy has rightly said :

> In a future psychology of personality there will surely be a place for directly grappling with the question of man's response to the cosmos, his sense of unity with it.... There may be a touch of neurotic phobia in the persistence with which the modern study of man has evaded the question of his need in some way, to come to terms with the cosmos as a whole.[5]

The cultivation of an attitude of equipoise (*samatvam*) of mind is the essential character of a whole personality which has come to terms with the cosmos as a whole. He is not perturbed by the momentary feelings of pleasure and pain. The yoga methods discipline the body, mind and the ego in such a manner that a man though in the world and of the world, rises above it and views everything impartially. His aim is his identity with Brahman, the Over-soul, the Super-conscious. The realization of this goal makes him a perfect man.

(*Concluded*)

[5] *Personality, A Bio-social Approach* (Harper 1947. p. 919.

The moral virtues, without religion, are but cold, lifeless, and insipid ; it is only religion which opens the mind to great conceptions, fills it with the most sublime ideas, and warms the soul with more than sensual pleasures.

—Addison

* * *

Religion presents few difficulties to the humble ; many to the proud ; insuperable ones to the vain.

—Hare

MUSIC AND VIVEKANANDA

SWAMI HARSHANANDA

'MUSIC IS the universal language of mankind,'[1] says Longfellow. It is said to be the speech of angels.[2] 'It hath charms to soothe the savage beast,'[3] writes James Bramston. Shakespeare says in his *Merchant of Venice*:

'The man that hath no music in himself
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, strategems and spoils'[4]

'A song will outlive all sermons in the memory,' says Henry Giles. These sayings of savants should suffice to show the importance of music in the life of mankind.

The origin of music is concealed in the bosom of pre-historic India. It dates back to the periods of the *Ṛg Veda*, and of the *Sāma Veda*; that means, to the period between 4500 B.C. and 2000 B.C. When music in other nations was still at one of the earliest stages of evolution viz. the folk songs, Indian music had developed into a systematic science with its conceptions of *śruti, svara, rāga, laya* and *tāla*. We have a clear reference to the *sapta-svara*-system in the early Upaniṣads like *Nārada parivrājaka* and *Garbha*.

Like other arts and sciences in ancient India, music and dance (which were actually two aspects of the same art in the early stages) also had religion as their basis. They were essentially religious in character and were used as a means of expressing devotion to and realizing God. *Nādopāsanā* (meditation through music) as it was termed, was considered to be highly efficacious in religious life. Nārada and Tumbura of hoary antiquity as also Tulasī Dās, Mīra Bāi, Kabīr, Nānak, Rāmaprasād, Kamalākānta, Tukaram, Purandara Dāsa and Tyāgarāja of historical times are shining examples of the efficacy of *nādopāsanā*. These great sages and servants of God used the art of music not only as a means of realization but also for spreading true religion among the masses at the most critical periods of our religious history. Indian music being thus essentially devotional in character, can rightly be termed as '*bhajans*'.

A *bhajan,* if it has to be perfect, must satisfy certain essential conditions. These can be listed as follows: A good voice, accompaniments, theoretical knowledge of music, first rate composition, clear pronunciation and devotion. A sweet voice is the *sine qua non* of *bhajan*. Without it *bhajan* is no *bhajan*. It is like the digit 1 of a mathematical figure followed by zeros. The latter have their meaning and add to the value of the figure only if that digit '1' is placed at the beginning. Otherwise, they are just zeros. Similarly instrumental accompaniments, knowledge of the techniques of music etc., enhance the grace of *bhajan* if and when the voice is sweet.

Assuming that the voice of the singer is sweet, good, and correctly tuned musical accompaniments like the *tānpūrā, tabla, sarod, sitār, vinā,* violin etc. will undoubtedly increase the total effect. The whole concert will get a polished touch if the science and technique of music are suitably combined.

All this combination will be to no purpose if the composition that is sung is not sufficiently poetical and is bereft of fine noble sentiments. If a really good composition is sung with feeling and in sufficiently clear tones so as to bring out the correct meaning and sentiments contained in it, the total effect will be marvellous.

1 Outre-Mer.
2 Carlyle — *Essays.*
3 Man of Taste.

Swami Vivekananda had been blessed by Nature with all the primary requirements of music. He had added great refinement to this gift by his deep knowledge of its technique as also by strenuous practice.

He had inherited a richly vibrant and intensely sweet voice, which was often likened to the sound of a Chinese gong, from his parents. It was this unique sweetness of his voice that often induced Sri Ramakrishna to request him to sing. The very first song that Narendra sang before Sri Ramakrishna at Dakshineswar threw the latter into deep samādhi. The following incident at Mount Abu will throw a good light on the sweetness of his music: 'The Swami soon gathered around him a number of devoted followers with whom he used to walk in the evening. One day they were walking along the Baily's Walk commanding the most beautiful scenery of the hill-station. Below them stretched the lake of Mt. Abu. The Swami with his friends left the walk and sat down amongst the stones. He began to sing and his song went on for hours. Some Europeans who were also taking an evening stroll were struck with the sweet music and waited for hours to get a glimpse of the singer. At last he came down and they congratulated him on his sweet voice and ecstatic song.'[5]

Swamiji had attained a high degree of proficiency in music even as a student. He had systematically studied and practised vocal as well as instrumental music for about five years under the able tutelage of Ahammad Khan and Beni Gupta, the two well-known musicians of his time. He could play many a musical instrument though he excelled in vocal music. He was an adept at singing *bhajans*. He knew quite a few musical compositions in various languages like Bengali, Hindi, Urdu, Persian and Sanskrit. He wrote an elaborate preface to a book of Bengali songs compiled by one of his friends, in which he has discussed the science and technique of Indian music. This learned introduction gives an inkling into the depth of his scholarship in the field of music.

The following incident that took place in the house of one Sri Manmathanatha Choudhuri of Bhagalpur reveals the perfect musician in Swamiji: 'One morning in August of the year 1890, Swami Vivekananda with Swami Akhandananda came unexpectedly to my house. Thinking them to be ordinary *sādhus,* I did not pay them much attention. . . . Once I noticed him humming a tune to himself. So I asked him if he could sing. He replied, "Very little." Being pressed hard by us he sang, and what was my surprise to see that as in learning so in music he had wonderful accomplishment! Next day I asked him if he were willing that I should invite some singers and musicians; he consented and I asked many musicians, several of whom were *ostads,* or adepts in the art, to come. Believing that the music would end by nine or ten at the latest, I did not arrange for supper for the guests. Swamiji sang without ceasing till two or three o'clock in the morning. All without exception were so charmed, that they forgot hunger and thirst and all idea of time! None moved from his seat or thought of going home. Kailash Babu who was accompanying the Swami in his songs, was forced to give up finally, for his fingers had become stiff and had lost all sensation. Such superhuman power I have never seen in anybody, nor do I expect to see it again. The next evening all the guests of the previous night, and many others, presented themselves without any invitation. The player on the instrument also came, but Swamiji did not sing that evening. So everyone was disappointed.'[6]

This paper cannot be deemed to be complete if Swamiji's views on music are not given. In his 'Addresses on Bhaktiyoga' he declares that music has got a tremendous effect on the human mind: 'Music has such tremendous power over the human mind; it brings it to concentration in a moment. You will find the dull, ignorant, low, brute-lik

[5] *Life of Swami Vivekananda* by Eastern & Western Disciples, P. 218.

[6] *Ibid.*, P. 195 f.

human beings who never steady their minds for a moment at other times, when they hear attractive music, immediately become charmed and concentrated. Even the minds of animals ... become charmed with music.'[7]

In his lecture on 'The Ramayana' delivered in California he states that in India even music and dance are considered to be religion: 'The drama in India was a very holy thing. Drama and music are themselves held to be religion. Any song, if one's whole soul is in that song, one attains to salvation; one has nothing else to do. They say it leads to the same goal as meditation.'[8]

In one of his epistles written to an American lady he equates music to worship: 'Music is the highest art, and to those who understand, is the highest worship.'[9]

He reveals the secret of perfect music in one of his class talks thus: 'There is science in *dhrupad, khayāl;* but it is in *kīrtan* ... that there is real music — for, there is feeling. Feeling is the soul, the secret of everything ... The sciences of *dhrupad* etc. applied to the music of *kīrtan* will produce the perfect music.'[10]

To an untrained Indian ear, Western music sounds like 'the howl of jackals'! Swamiji also, before he went to the West, had held a similar opinion. There he began to listen to their music attentively and to study it minutely. As a result of this, he developed great admiration, especially for its perfection of harmony which, in his opinion Indian music lacked.

The Swami was of the definite view that the real Indian music lay in *dhrupad* and the *kīrtan.* They were developing and improving steadily on the right lines before the impact of Islamic culture, which distorted and spoiled them. This was the opinion he often expressed (*op. cit.* Vol. V, Pp. 277-297).

Swami Vivekananda was also a poet. He has composed a few hymns in Sanskrit and Bengali as also some songs in the latter language. His hymns *nikhila-bhuvana-janma* (on Śiva), *kā tvam śivé śubhakaré* (on the Divine Mother) and *ācaṇḍālāpratihatarayo* (on Sri Ramakrishna) are a rare combination of literary beauty, philosophy and devotion. His other famous poem *Om hrīm ṛtam* on Sri Ramakrishna is sung during the evening service in all the centres of the Ramakrishna Order.

The most famous of all his Bengali poems is his *khaṇḍana-bhava-bandhana,* which is the first song to be sung during the evening worship in all the monasteries of the Ramakrishna Order. This hymn is remarkable for its booming melody and is ideally suited for chorus. When it is sung by a large gathering to the accompaniment of organs, *khol* and cymbals, it is simply soul-stirring and inspiring!

The song *eka rūpa arūpa nāma* on the Highest Brahman as also the two songs on Śiva: *tā thaiya* and *hara hara bhūtanātha,* are full of sweet melody and perfect rythm.

We thus see that Swami Vivekananda was as great a musician as a spiritual teacher or a social reformer or a patriot or a deep scholar or an inspired orator or a great writer.

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7 *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda,* Vol. IV, P. 7. Sixth Edition, 1948.

8 *op. cit.,* P. 70.

9 *op. cit.,* Vol. V, P. 95. Fifth Edition, 1947.

10 *op. cit.* Vol. VII, P. 395. Third Edition, 1947.

Music has charms to soothe the savage breast, to soften rocks, and bend the knotted oak.

—CONGREVE

* * *

Music is the language of praise; and one of the most essential preparations for eternity is delight in praising God; a higher acquirement, I do think, than even delight and devotedness in prayer.

—CHALMERS

BHAKTI AS A MEANS OF EMANCIPATION IN RAMANUJA

S. R. BHATT

EVERY SYSTEM of thought in India is a felt need of an age, and in view of the circumstances it was high time for Rāmānuja to systematize and expound the doctrine of the God of grace and devotion. He provided the love of God with an enduring philosophy and philosophy with an abiding love of God.

There are two prominent ways (though often a triple method is described, viz., of *karma, jñāna* and *bhakti*) to liberation, viz., *jñāna* and *bhakti*. In *jñāna* — also called *avyaktopāsanā* — attainment of *brāhmīsthiti* is necessary as is described in the *Bhāgavad Gīta*.[1] This state can be achieved only by great efforts and long practice.[2] In it actions are to be surrendered to the Lord (Bhramārpaṇa).[3] But this path is very difficult and strewn with many hazards and hardships. In Bhakti yoga, which is easier than Jñāna yoga, the self is to be surrendered to the Lord. Śaṅkara has advocated the latter and Rāmānuja has preferred the former.

The origin of the cult of *bhakti* in Hinduism is shrouded in mystery. But it is quite evident that its germs are found in the Vedic hymns, 'The Vedic hymns are replete with sentiments of piety and reverence in the worship of the gods. The *upāsanā kāṇḍa* of the Āraṇyakas and the Upaniṣads have laid the foundation of the *bhakti mārga*, way of devotion and faith.'[4] 'It is impossible to read some of the soul-stirring Vedic hymns to Varuṇa, Savitṛ and Uṣas and not feel the presence of true devotion, however inadequate may have been its philosophical background.'[5] The doctrine of devotion is clearly evident in the later Upaniṣads like *Katha*,[6] *Mundaka*,[7] *Śvetāśvatara*.[8] In the *Śvetāśvatara* the doctrine of grace is emphasized and the doctrine of self-surrender is suggested.[9] Thus the cult of *bhakti* adumbrated in the Vedic hymns and the Upaniṣads and developed in the Gītā, Mahābhārata and Viṣṇupurāṇa, blossoms forth fully in Rāmānuja.

According to Rāmānuja *bhakti* alone is the means to emancipation. He defines *bhakti* as a meditation on God accompanied by love.[10] *Bhakti* as a loving meditation is also described by him as a steady remembrance.[11] This steady remembrance is compared to an uninterrupted flow of oil.[12] Such remembrance is of the same character as intuition, as testified by *Mundaka*[13] and *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*[14] Upaniṣads. Rāmānuja writes that this view is supported by the Vākyakāra as well.[15] This steady remembrance is a high state of consciousness in which there is complete immediate presentation of the beloved God, cultivated and at last attained by the uninterrupted contemplation

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1 *Gita*, II. 72.

2 *Ibid.*, IV. 18-23.

3 *Ibid.*, IV. 24.

4 B. N. Seal, *Comparative Studies in Christianity and Vaisnavism*, P. 8.

5 Belvalkar and Ranade, H.O.I.P. Vol. II. P. 409.

6 II. 23.

7 III. 2.3.

8 III. 20, VI. 21.

9 VI. 18.

10 स्नेहपूर्वमनुध्यानं भक्तिरित्युच्यते बुधैः ।

10 Here Ramanuja quotes *Sve*. III. 8. *Tait, Ary.* 3.12.7., and *Gita* VIII. 22, XI. 53-4.

11 एवं रूपा ध्रुवानुस्मृतिरेव भक्तिशब्देनाभिधीयते । S.B. 1.1.1.

12 ध्यानं च तैलधारावदविच्छिन्नस्मृतिसंतानरूपम् । *Ibid.*, 1.1.1

13 तस्मिन्दृष्टे परावरे 2.2.8.

14 आत्मा वाऽरे द्रष्टव्यः 2.4.5.

15 S.B. 1.1.1.

of His perfection.[16] He who possesses this remembrance marked by the character of immediate presentation, is chosen by the Highest Self, and by him is the Highest Self gained.[17] This remembrance is also called *svapnādhigamya*,[18] i.e., to be attained as a cognition similar to a dream.

Rāmānuja regards this *bhakti* as synonymous with *upāsanā*.[19] In the Vedic literature we find both these words used for devotion. Bhakti, derived from the root *bhaj*, appears in the Vedic passage, '*mahāste viṣṇoḥ sumatim bhajāmahe*.'[20] The root *ās* with the prefix *upa*, is also used side by side with the root *bhaj*, as we find in the Yajurveda passage, '*yasya viśva upāsaté*'.[21]

Rāmānuja emphatically maintains that this devotion is not an unintellectual; fervent glow of emotion or exuberance of feeling and erotic element. He holds that it is essentially a specific form of cognition.[22] That knowing and meditating are synonymous[23] is expressed in the *Taittīrīya Āraṇyaka* (3.12.7), *Chāndogya* (3.18.1. & 3., 4.1.4., 4.2.2), and *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* (1.4.7). Rāmānuja writes that it is only knowledge in the form of meditation which being daily practised and constantly improved by repetition and continued upto forsaking the mortal frame, becomes the means of liberation.[24] In *Vedārtha Samgraha* he writes that *bhakti* is a kind of knowledge so excellent, precious and exclusive that it robs everything else of its interest. He that has acquired this knowledge is elected by the Supreme Person, and so he can grasp Him. . . . It is through *bhakti* yoga, furthered at first by *karma* yoga and subsequently by *jñāna* yoga, that such knowledge in the form of supreme *bhakti* arises.[25] In the *Gītā bhāṣya* Rāmānuja makes it clear that the knowledge of *ātman* combined with *karma* yoga leads to *jñāna* yoga.[26] Through knowledge one arrives at the true contemplation for realizing *ātman* (*prāpta ātman*)[27] which results in the knowledge of God. Rāmānuja quotes *Chāndogya* (7.8.1.) to corroborate his view that the contemplation of *ātman* is auxiliary to the attainment of God. In the first invocatory verse of Śrī Bhāṣya Rāmānuja beseeches the Lord — *bhavatu mama parasmin śemuṣī bhakti rūpā* —, i.e., 'May my mind be filled with devotion towards the Highest Brahman'.

Rāmānuja makes it quite clear that mere knowledge is not sufficient for liberation. It is the meditation which takes the form of devotion that is required.[28] This meditation is of the form of knowledge which is prescribed by the Vedānta.[29] But this knowledge is not mere *vākyārtha jñāna*, but that which is denoted by *dhyāna*, *upāsanā*, and similar terms.[30] Here Rāmānuja derives support from the *Bṛhdāraṇyaka* (1.4.15, 4.4.21., 4.5.6.), *Chāndogya* (3.7.1.), *Muṇḍaka* (2.2.6.) and *Kaṭha* (1.3.15.) Upaniṣads. On this basis Rāmānuja distinguishes between two kinds of knowledge, one lower knowledge based on the scriptural sentences, and the other higher knowledge which is of the nature of devout meditation and consists of direct intuition of Brahman.[31]

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16 *Ibid.*, 1.1.1.

17 अत: साक्षात्काररूपस्मृति: । स एव परेणात्माना वरणीयों भवति । तेनैव लभ्यो परमात्मेत्युक्तं भवति । *Ibid.*

18 Manu uses this word (XII. 122) and Ramanuja in *Vedartha Samgraha* borrows it.

19 उपासना पर्यायत्वात् भक्ति शब्दस्य । S.B. 1.1.1.

20 R. V. 1.156.3.

21 XXV. 13.

22 भक्ति च ज्ञान विशेष एव । *Vedartha Samgraha* 144.

23 वेदानामुपासनमित्यवगम्यते ।

24 वेदनस्य ध्यानरूपस्याहरहरनुष्ठीयमानस्याभ्यासाधेयातिशयस्य आप्रयाणादनुवर्तमानस्य ब्रह्मप्राप्ति-

25 ज्ञानकर्मानुग्रहीतं भक्तियोगम् । *Gita Bhasya*, Intro.

26 II. 53.

27 This word is derived from Ch. 7 8. 1.

28 भक्तिरूपपन्नानुध्यानमेव *Vedartha Samgraha*, 91.

29 वेदान्तविहित वेदना रूपो ध्यानम्

30 अतो वाक्यार्थ ज्ञानादन्यदेव ध्यानोपासनादि शब्दवाच्यं ज्ञानं वेदान्त वाक्यैर्विधीत्सितम् ।

31 S.B. 1.2.23.

Thus Rāmānuja believes in the mystic love of God. The system of Rāmānuja, from this point of view, culminates in a lofty mysticism in which the soul seeks to realize its freedom in a loving union with the Whole, and finds its highest life in the intellectual love of God, where view of God becomes vision of God and in which the finite is infinitized. That means wisdom must mature, fructify in the love of God. This, in other words means, the infinite expansion of the consciousness of the soul so as to realize fully its loving affinity with the whole creation.

Rāmānuja is of the opinion that such a *bhakti* requires a reverent concentration, and as such, is an effect of devout remembrance. In this connection he quotes *Kaṭha*[32] wherein it is said that *pravacana, medhā* and *śruti,* being the sources of direct cognition, it follows that only a product of *smṛti,* can single out a devotee for election by the Supreme. That product of *smṛti* says Rāmānuja, is *bhakti.*

It is to be noted that this *bhakti* is not an outer form of worship, but is an inner spiritual attitude produced and enriched by virtues. It is not an emotionalism, but a training of the body, will and the intellect. The flower of *bhakti* can be produced by a scheme of '*Sādhana saptaka*'. These seven means to steady remembrance resulting in *bhakti,* are borrowed by Rāmānuja from the Vākyakāra, and for this he also derives support from the Upaniṣads and the Gītā.[33] The first is *viveka,* i.e., discrimination or purity of food. This dietetic purity promotes the purity of being or *sattvaśuddhi,* and *sattvaśuddhi* again promotes clear and determinate knowledge. The second is *vimoka,* i.e., freedom from desire, resulting in detachment and tranquillity. The third is *abhyāsa,* i.e., frequent repetition or continued practice. The fourth is *kriyā,* i.e., performance of the *pañcamahā yajñas* according to one's own ability. The fifth is *kalyāṇa,* i.e., virtuous conduct. It comprises of truth, simplicity, charity, benevolence and non-maliciousness etc. The sixth is *anavasāda,* i.e., constant vigilance and absence of despondency. The last is *anuddharṣa,* i.e., absence of exultation. Equipped with these the devotee enters on the life of devotion and cultivates the love of God. Along with these seven aids, Rāmānuja suggests also yajna and other karmas.[34]

The *bhakti* which is the result of this *sādhana saptaka* and other aids, has three stages and nine phases. The three stages are *dhruvānusmṛti* (firm meditation), *asakṛdāvṛtti* (frequent repetition) and *darśana samānākāratā* (orison of union). Its nine phases are as follows :— *stuti* (glorification), *smṛti* (remembrance), *namaskṛti* (homage), *vandana* (salutation), *yātana* (mortification), *kirtana* (exaltation), *guṇaśravaṇa* (listening to the attributes of the Lord), *vacana* (narrating them), *dhyāna* (meditation), *arcana* (adoration) and *praṇāma* (prostration). Though the Vedas, Upaniṣads, Gītā and Viṣṇu purāṇa do not expressly enumerate all these at one place, they contain many references to all of them, so it can safely be said that Rāmānuja's *bhakti* is based on the Vedas.

In Rāmānuja, as well as in the early literature, the exuberance of feeling and the erotic element in devotion were never allowed. The devotion in Rāmānuja is quite restrained and contemplative, and consists of calm meditation and serene contemplation.

[32] II. 23.

[33] Ramanuja derives support from Ch. 3. 14. 1., *Brh.* 4. 4. 22 & 25, *Mundaka* 3. 1. 5., 3. 2. 4., *Prasna* 1. 16. and *Gita* VIII. 6.

[34] एवं रूपाया: ध्रुवानुस्मृते: साधनानि यज्ञादीनि कर्माणि । S.B. 1. 1. 1.

Solid devotions resemble the rivers which run under the earth — they steal from the eyes of the world to seek the eyes of God; and it often happens that those of whom we speak least on earth, are best known in heaven.

—CAUSSIN

THE DOCTRINE OF INCARNATION AS EXPOUNDED BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

K. R. SUNDARARAJAN

"THE UNIVERSE according to a Philosophical theory of the Hindus," writes Swamiji, "is moving in cycles and wave form. It rises, reaches its zenith, then falls and remains in the hollow, as it were, for some time, once more to rise, and so on in wave after wave. What is true of the universe is true of every part of it. The march of human affairs is like that. ...... In the religious world the same movement exists. In every nation's spiritual life there is a fall as well as a rise. The nation goes down and everything seems to go to pieces. Then again it gains strength, rises; a huge wave comes, sometimes a tidal wave—and always on the topmost crest of the wave is a shining soul, a messenger... He is the impetus that makes the wave rise, the nation rise... He puts forth his tremendous power upon society; and society makes him what he is. These are the great world thinkers. These are the prophets of the world, the Messengers of life, the Incarnations of God."[1]

The Incarnations, in the words of Swami Vivekananda, are the "fairest flowers in human history" born to achieve the following purposes: (1) They are to show what true humanity consists in, in other words they represent the ideal man. (2) They are the teachers of all teachers who live to teach the true essence of spirituality. (3) They are born in order to preserve the world and humanity. (4) They are the mediums through which spirituality is transmitted and grace is bestowed, or as Swami Vivekananda puts it, "We cannot see God except through them."[2]

Incarnation is an event which is impelled by God's love, directed towards the rooting out of the sufferings of mankind. It is a sharing in of the sorrows and sufferings of the fellow human beings. This is characteristic of a true Incarnation. Swamiji writes in one of his letters; "The Upaniṣads and the Gītā are the true scriptures—Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Buddha, Caitanya, ... and so on are the true Avatāras — for they had their hearts as broad as the sky—and above all Sri Ramakṛṣṇa."[3] "Where is that love, that weeping heart at the sorrows of others in the dry pedantry of the pandit?"[4] asks Swami Vivekananda. It is this love and suffering for the sake of others that truly marks an Incarnation.

The human history has witnessed the advent of many Incarnations. The cyclic theory of the universe which is often stressed by Swami Vivekananda necessitates the recurrent theory of Incarnation. There will be Incarnations as long as the human history continues its cyclic movements. Swamiji reminds us of the famous passage of the Bhagavad Gītā, where Lord Kṛṣṇa says that He will incarnate Himself, whenever there is decline of *dharma*. This decline in spirituality is inevitable in the matter-bound universe, and hence the advent of Incarnations in future is a matter of necessity. "Whenever the world goes down" writes Swami Vivekananda, "the Lord comes to help it forward. And so he comes, from age to age, in place after place."

Regarding the historicity of an Incarnation, the point of view of Swami Vivekananda is simple. The Incarnations are great teachers of mankind, who live to exemplify the eternal truths, and to instruct the people of those times regarding the right way of life and con-

[1] *Complete Works*, Vol. IV, p. 116, Sixth Edn. 1948.

[2] *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 53. Sixth Edition, 1948.

[3] *Ibid.*, Vol. VI, p. 354. Fourth Edition, 1947.

[4] *Ibid.*

duct. Even if the historicity of these teachers is disputed it should not matter.

What is important is the message and not the Messenger who voices the message. In his lecture on "Christ, the Messenger", Swami Vivekananda writes : "Suppose Jesus of Nazareth was teaching and a man came and told him : 'What you teach is beautiful. I believe that it is the way to perfection and I am ready to follow it ; but I do not care to worship you as the only begotten Son of God.' What would be the answer of Jesus of Nazareth ? 'Very well, brother, follow the ideal and advance in your own way. I do not care whether you give me the credit for the teaching or not. I am not a shopkeeper. I do not trade in religion. I only teach truth, and truth is nobody's property. Nobody can patent truth. Truth is God himself. Go forward !'"[5] It is Swaṃiji's view that the Incarnations reflect the eternal truths and Hinduism as a religion based on eternal truths has no problem regarding the historicity and the personality of its teachers, like those religions which are centered round and dependent on a definite personality as its founder. Swami Vivekananda says : "You (Hindus) obey your religion not because it came through the authority of a sage, no not even of an Incarnation. Kṛṣṇa is not the authority of the Vedas, but the Vedas are the authority of Kṛṣṇa himself. His glory is that he is the greatest preacher of the Vedas that ever existed. So with the other Incarnations ; so with all our sages."[6]

What is the picture of Sri Ramakṛṣṇa Paramahamsa, that Swami Vivekananda depicts as an Incarnation ? The time of Paramahamsa's Avatāra, Swamiji writes, is one in which the descendants of the Aryans were 'fallen from the true ideals and rules of conduct, were devoid of the spirit of renunciation, were addicted only to blind usages and were degraded in intellect.' . . . The purpose of Paramahamsa's Avatara "is to demonstrate what the true religion of the Aryan race is ; to show where amidst all its many divisions and offshoots, scattered over the land in the course of its immemorial history, lies the true unity of the Hindu religion".[7] Swami Vivekananda advances the following three reasons to show that Sri Ramakṛṣṇa is truly an Incarnation. He writes in one of his letters :

1. "Whatever the Vedas, the Vedanta, and all other Incarnations have done in the past, Sri Ramakṛṣṇa lived to practise in the course of a single life.

2. One cannot understand the Vedas, the Vedanta, the Incarnations and so forth without understanding his life. For he was the explanation.

3. From the date he was born, has sprung the Satya Yuga. Henceforth there is an end to all distinctions, and every one down to the Chandala will be sharer in the Divine Love.... He was the harbinger of peace — the separation between the Hindus and Mohammedans, between Hindus and Christians, are all now things of the past."[8]

Sri Ramakṛṣṇa is the need of the hour, and he is the one that can remedy the maladies of the present age. "He beats all previous records", Swāmi Vivekānanda writes, since "he was more liberal, more original, more progressive than all his predecessors. . . . The previous Incarnations were all right, but they have been synthesized in the person of Sri Ramakṛṣṇa. . . Teach them that all great Personalities should be duly honoured, but homage should be paid now to Sri Ramakṛṣṇa."[9]

[5] Vol. IV, p. 146. *Op. cit.*

[6] Vol. III, p. 249. *Op. cit.*

[7] Vol. VI, pp. 156, 157. *Op. cit.*

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 302.

[9] Vol. VII, p. 426. Third Edition. 1947.

THE NATURE OF SCRIPTURE

ELIOT S. DEUTSCH

THERE ARE two kinds of literature. The one expresses a religious situation, the other expresses spiritual truth.

Art is the expression of a religious situation.

Scripture is the expression of spiritual truth.

Spirit is love. Truth is silence. Spiritual truth is the commingling of silence and love.

Scripture is sacred literature because it is brought forth from the Oneness manifest in man. Man, in his essence, is divine — though the divine Oneness transcends his ordinary knowing and being.

Scripture presents a way wherein the Divine may be realized. It is an expression of the mystery of being. It is a voice of affirmation, for language exceeds itself only when it is affirming.

Within every age and epoch, scripture may create itself.

EXPLICATION

RELIGIOUS SITUATION

A man, in so far as he is taken as an individual, as a separate person, is a relational being : he is a being who lives in relation to all that he takes as not-self. And with the reality of the Divine, of the principle of Oneness, all man's relational experience has the Divine as its context. Further, it is clear that a man's most fundamental relation conditions all his other relations. As is a man's relation to the Divine, so is the spiritual nature of his relation to everything else.

Man is "religious," then, not simply by his own choice, but by the nature of his existence. He can indeed choose his actual living relation with the Divine, but he cannot choose his having to make this choice. This having to make a choice is imposed upon him, as it were, by the act of his being human. Man's "religious situation" is his being in relation to the Divine, and the fact that this relation is the ground, context, and condition for all other thought and action.

And hence for man's literary expression, the making of a twofold division between the expression of this religious situation and the expression of spiritual truth.

"ART"

Works of art are the embodiment, the concrete presentation, of some one or more aspects of man's relational experience.

Whereas scripture is utterance grounded in the Divine, spoken as it is from its centre ; art is expression having the Divine only as its relational context. The utterer of scripture is no longer within the relational structure of experience ; the artist is a relational being and relational experience is necessarily present in his work. And this is the case even where, as in much of so-called "absurd" literature, there seems to be a total absence of relatedness. This absence of relation, or in some cases this anti-relation, does, in the final analysis, itself represent a relational choice.

A poem, a play, a novel, a short story, uses the materials of relational experience and consequently gives expression to a fundamental religious choice. The general, if not the specific, content of a work of art is thus man's "religious situation".

SPIRITUAL TRUTH

"Spirit is love. Truth is silence. Spiritual truth is the commingling of silence and love."

Love is that joyous contemplative state which is free from the longing for possession. It is that state of harmony which encompasses everything in unity as well as in singularity.

It is meaningful to conceive of love as something more than a transient, subjective human

emotion ; for phenomenologically speaking, it is experienced precisely as a state of being in which one participates. To "objectify" love does not necessarily mean to conceive of it as some kind of power or force which is different from, or other to, oneself. This indeed would be mere anthropomorphism or unfounded objectification. Love which is grounded in the Divine is the *harmonization* of subject/object distinctions. Love is not an "object" and love is not merely a state of the experiencing "subject". Love is that state of being wherein one finds oneself in harmony with the One.

And silence is that state of being which is the overcoming of all subject/object distinctions. The silence which stands for the most fundamental truth of being is thus not merely the absence of sound ; it is rather the very fullness of being which takes-up and transcends everything.

"Spiritual truth" is the interpenetration of love, the divine harmony, and silence, the divine transcendence. It is that which is the content of scripture.

Divine in man

The "divine in man" is the love and silence of the ground of his being. It is the superplenetous joy and consciousness of his being at-one with the Divine.

Mystery of being

And this Oneness is "Mysterious" not simply because it resists explanation within the subject/object structure of ordinary experience, but because it is different in kind from anything to be found within our ordinary experience. Scripture is an expression of this mystery, for in scripture the expressed word, through the power of its utterance, pierces through the opaque surface of the subject/object structure of experience and shines forth in love, grounded in silence. Scripture is expressed from the standpoint of the divine Oneness.

Creates itself

We speak of scripture creating itself with the intention of calling attention to the ever-recurring possibilities of scripture being brought forth. A religion dooms itself to sterility when it assumes, and dogmatizes, the finality of "what has been said". Scripture arises from the standpoint of the divine Oneness : this is a timeless oneness and hence a man at any time can realize it.

Scripture is a term for those works which offer a way to an experience of spiritual truth through the affirmative power of the word spoken from the standpoint of the One.

A PILGRIMAGE TO SRI SARADA MATH AT DAKSHINESWAR

DEVAKI K. MENON

In July 1964 I got an opportunity to go on a pilgrimage tour of North India. I was specially happy I could fulfil my long-cherished desire of visiting the centres of the Ramakrishna Mission, sacred to the memory of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Swami Vivekananda and Sri Sarada Devi.

At Calcutta we first visited the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture. One must see it for oneself to know what it is and to have an idea of the various aspects of Indian and International Culture focussed at that Centre.

Next, we paid a visit to the Kali Temple at Dakshineswar, where Sri Ramakrishna had officiated as a Priest during the early years of his *sādhana*. Though the Deity is represented in a fearful form, She did not strike terror in our minds as we recollected how She in all benign grace, blessed Sri Ram-

krishna, Her Devotee with Her visions as a kind and compassionate Mother, and how She appeared before Sri Sarada Devi in a dream as her dark-complexioned loving sister.

After worshipping the Goddess we visited the sanctuaries of Sri Ramakrishna and Sri Sarada Devi, near the temple, where they had spent several years, undergoing severe *sādhana*.

We found the place pure, calm and serene. By the side of the holy Ganges, we could feel the presence of another spiritual Ganges emanating from that holiest of holy centres, blessing numerous devotees and pilgrims with heavenly peace. We were able to spend sometime there in meditation and fulfil one of our life's desires.

On Saturday 25th July we visited Sri Ramakrishna Math, Belur, on the opposite bank of the Ganges.

Next morning accompanied by a guide we visited places like Sri Sarada Math, Cossipore Garden House, Udbodhan Office (known as the "Mother's house" to devotees), etc.

Sri Sarada Math is so close to the Ganges that one can sit on the steps of the Math and meditate for hours together, with the Holy River in front, blessing you like a mother.

As soon as I entered the Sri Sarada Math, I was so taken up with the view of the Ganges that I stood for sometime gazing at the river, when a gentle touch of a friend from behind me roused me from my reveries. When I turned round, I found a familiar face. Our meeting there was a happy coincidence. I was overjoyed on meeting her. She joyfully offered *prasadam* to us and introduced us to the Sisters of the Math. I had no mind to leave the place; but as we had a busy programme to go through, I had to hurry up from the Math promising all the Sisters that if I had the good fortune to visit Calcutta again I would stay in their holy company, which I valued so much.

In this atomic age when the world is threatened with disaster strong currents of spirituality are necessary to counteract the evil forces. The Ramakrishna Mission true to its ideal of Renunciation and Service is doing enormous humanitarian work for the promotion of culture and education and also for the relief of sickness and poverty in our country.

The opening of Sri Sarada Math at Calcutta in 1954, the year of the birth-centenary of the Holy Mother, is an important step towards widening the sphere of the spiritual and cultural activities of the Mission.

It is well-known that the Sarada Math is the materialization of a prophetic vision which the great patriot saint and seer, Swami Vivekananda, had long entertained, but could not be fulfilled during his own lifetime. In fact when Swamiji organized the Belur Math for Sannyasins, he had also planned to establish a similar nunnery for women.

Boys like Nachiketas and girls like Gargi who have an inborn yearning to realize God, though rare, are still to be found in our country. For the girls a centre like Sri Sarada Math, where there is the proper atmosphere for the pursuit of the highest knowledge, is a great blessing.

Swami Vivekananda also had thought of the practical aspect of life: how, for the spiritual and material uplift of the women of India, they are to be given proper training and education with emphasis on our basic ideals, culture and spiritual background. Swamiji used to say, 'The uplift of women is essential. First of all intensify the ideal of chastity within them above everything else. History and Puranas, religious arts, science, house-keeping, cooking, sewing, hygiene—the simple essential points in these subjects ought to be taught to our women. Along with other things they should acquire the spirit of valour and heroism.' Swamiji visualized India with women rising to their highest glory equalling or even excelling the examples of Gargi and Maitreyi, Mira Bai and Ahalya Bai.

For the uplift of women none can succeed better than their enlightened Sisters. Swamiji wanted that like Sannyasins, women also must

come forward, throwing away worldly ambitions and aspirations, dedicating themselves to the ideal of renunciation and service.

At present there are only two centres for women — one is the Sarada Math at Calcutta and the other is the Sarada Mandir at Trichur (Kerala).

Let us hope that by the blessings of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, and Sri Sarada Devi, and by the sincere efforts of devotees, more such centres may come into being all over India as a greater fulfilment of the ideal of Indian womanhood visualized by Swami Vivekananda and so well exemplified in the glorious life of Sri Sarada Devi, the Holy Mother.

LORD SUBRAHMANYA

M. V. SRIDATTA SARMA

(I)

SUBRAHMANYA, THE War-god (Mars) of the Hindu pantheon is a very popular deity. Shrines dedicated to Subrahmanya are common on hill tops, villages and towns of Southern India. This deity, who is a son of Śiva is known as Kārtikeya in Northern India. The discovery of the image of Kārtikeya along with those of other Hindu gods in Java in recent years indicates that in the early centuries of the Christian era, the worship of this god was common in that country. The Guptas were worshippers of this War-god as will be seen from the gold coins struck by Samudra Gupta. In one of the types struck by this ruler, we see on the reverse, the figure of Kārtikeya riding on a peacock.

The term Subrahmanya is mentioned in a passage of the Taittirīya Āraṇyaka. Of the sixteen priests who participated in Vedic sacrifices, one was designated Subrahmanya. According to the interpretation of Bhatta Bhaskara, this term denotes a person who is well-versed in the Vedas and who is engaged in doing good to the community at large. *(śobhanam brahma subrahma vedaḥ tasmai hitam).*

In the *Śaṁkara Saṁhita,* there is an allusion to this god as having curbed the pride of Brahmā, when the latter exposed his ignorance of the Veda. In view of this god's possessing the correct knowledge of the Veda, He is known as Subrahmanya. For having put down Brahma's pride, He is termed Brahma Śāstā. Says the *Śaṁkara Saṁhita* thus: 'Subrahmanya is the Supreme Spirit. He is the Eternal Lord on realising whom all those intricate chords of the heart get loosened and all doubts are warded off in no time.'

In a passage of the *Skānda Purana,*, Śiva addresses His spouse Parvati thus: 'Oh beloved, I am the Lord of the Brahmanas (those well versed in the knowledge of Brahman) and more exceedingly so is my son, who is known by the epithet Subrahmanya and is adored both by the Devas and the Asuras alike.'

brâhmaṇânamaham devaḥ sutarâm matsutaḥ priye.
subrahmanyassamâkhyât assurâsuranamaskṛtaḥ.

(II)

Stories connected with the birth of the War-god (Subrahmanya) are narrated at length in the *Śaṁkara Saṁhita, Śiva Puraṇa,* Valmiki's *Rāmāyaṇa* (Balakanda) as also the Vanaparva of the *Mahābhārata*. The celebrated bard Kalidasa selected this episode for his Kavya (*Kumārasaṁbhava*). Once the fiends headed by Tāraka (a personification of lawlessness, disorder and all evils connected therewith), Simhavaktra and Surapadma pleased the Grandsire and Mahadeva by their austerities

and consequently by dint of the favours extended to them, snatched away all power from the celestials.[1] Indra, the Lord of the Devas lost his position. The celestials were compelled to take up service under these imps. They were assigned several duties : as carriers of water and fodder, catchers of fish, lampmen, sentinels and guards. Their damsels were seized as captives and confined in the seraglio. This resulted in the sending of a deputation led by the Grandsire to the Great Lord (Mahadeva). He in turn gave them assurance and immersed Himself in Yoga. The entire universe was converted to a state of dispassion. Indulgence in the pleasures of mundane existence was viewed with disfavour and considered as drinking some poisonous potion.

The celestials again approached Śiva and said 'Lord, You, who are the remover of all straits, be kind enough to bless us with a generalissimo to vanquish the Titans as agreed by you already.' Instantly, they noticed the upward flow of tejas (lustre) from Śiva's head in six phases. This radiance was collected by Agni and Vayu and deposited in the midst of the reeds on the banks of the Ganges. At the behest of Vishnu, these forms were fostered by the Pleiades. Parvati beheld these forms and when she embraced them, they were combined into a single form possessing six faces and twelve hands. In view of the child having been nourished by the six Kṛttikas, this form was known by the term Kārtikeya. This is the version as given in the *Śaṁkara Saṁhita*.

According to the Bālakāṇḍa, the fierce and mighty sparks of *tejas* from Rudra developed into a solid form in the shape of a white mountain (sorrounded by a forest of glossy reeds). Such was its splendour that it resembled the sun and the fire. From out of this energy came forth Kārtikeya. Parvati who saw this form was upset and inflicted curses on the celestials that they should have no offsprings.

At the request of the celestials, Ganga assumed a divine form, when Agni sprinkled her with waters of energy. The fire was such that it began to consume her and the *tejas* was cast at the foot of the Himalayas. Its splendour resembled that of molten gold. All the surrounding objects were converted into gold as if by alchemy. Some of the objects were rendered into copper and steel, while the dross was transformed into tin and lead. The surrounding country was picturesque. From that day, gold which was bright as fire was known under the caption *Jātaroopa*. The grass, the trees as also bushes were transformed into gold, and the earth was called Vasumati. The child was born. Indra as also the spirits of atmosphere (Marut) directed the Pleiades to nurse the child, when they did this work by turns. In a single day, Kārtikeya vanquished all the demons.

The Vana Parva of the *Mahābhārata* gives a still different account. While Indra was engaged in recollecting his reverses in the battle with the Asuras, his attention was drawn towards the alarming cry of a damsel by name Devasena (literally, the forces of the Devas or good propensities). A Titan by name Kesin had seized her. The damsel was rescued by Indra who drove away the fiend. The damsel demanded not only protection but also urged for a valorous husband. A sacrifice was performed by the Devas for six days. As a result, Skanda was born with six heads and twelve arms. Indra anointed him as the generalissimo of the celestials. The refugee damsel Devasena was given to Skanda on the sixth day[2] of the bright fortnight (*Skanda ṣaṣti*), when all his ends were rendered successful. Ṣaṣti thus became the day of accomplishment.

śrijuṣṭaḥ pancamîṁ skandaḥ tasmâcchrî
pancamî smṛtâ
ṣaṣṭyâm kṛtârtho 'bhūd yasmât tasmât
ṣaṣṭî mahâtithiḥ

(*Vanaparva* : *Ch.* 229).

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[1] Taraka obtained immunity from death at the hands of any being other than an infant aged seven days (*Skanda Purana*). Surapadma sought death

[2] The sixth day of the waxing moon is always held sacred to Skanda.

Śiva sent a mandate to Skanda, directing him to vanquish Surapadma, Simhavaktra and Taraka with all their attendants and dependents. Lord Śiva declared 'Let there be victory to thee Subrahmanya everywhere. There cannot be even the least sign of defeat *(sarvatra te vijayaḥ kvacit vâ na parâbhavaḥ).* (*Śaṁkara Saṁhita*). Viṣṇu sounded the clarion and Agni assumed the form of a cock and bedecked Skanda's chariot as an ensign. Indra assumed the form of a peacock and offered himself as a vehicle. According to the *Bhaviṣya Purāna,* Viśvakarma prepared the missile known as Śaktyāyudha. Śiva presented the missiles to the generalissimo.

The divisions of the celestial army were set in array. A terrible sound was heard and darkness prevailed. It looked as though the clouds had gathered for a great deluge at the end of an aeon. Skanda swore thus :

'If it be true that right is might in the world and that only virtue can attain victory, let this Titan meet with the terrible doom.'

"*dharmaścet balavân loke dharmo jayati cetsadâ,*
tena satyena daityo ayam pralayam yatvitîrayau."
Skānda Purāna, Ch. xxxii-17.

The battle ensued and Skanda won the victory. The Lord, who was pleased with the prowess of Surapadma (who was in his former birth, his own vehicle) had his body cut into two halves. One of these in the form of a cock was selected by Skanda as an ensign, while the other which took the shape of a peacock was used as a vehicle (*vāhana*). Symbolically, this may also mean the curbing of pride or the ego sense (*ahaṁkāra*). The missile with which Surapadma was vanquished is indicative of viveka or discrimination. At the close of the battle, Indra and Agni withdrew abandoning the forms that they had assumed at the time of the fight. The suppression of these fiends is in other words expressive of the evil propensities curbed by *Daivi sampat* or virtues.

'God Śiva, the Good, had remained long lost in the Self-centred solitude of His asceticism, detached from the world of reality. And then Paradise was lost. But *Kumarasambhava* is the poem of Paradise. How was it regained ? When Sati, the Spirit of Reality, through humiliation, suffering and penance won the heart of Śiva, the Spirit of Goodness. And thus from the freedom of the real, with the restraint of the Good, was born the heroism that released Paradise from the demon of Lawlessness.' (Cf. Tagore : *Creative Unity* — The Religion of the Forest : p. 53).

(*To be continued*)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, M.A., Ph.D. is the Head of the Department of Philosophy, University of Madras. In his article 'The Triumphal Return of Swami Vivekananda' he briefly surveys Swamiji's return from the West and setting in motion the wheel of his Master's Mission.

Sri R. Ramakrishnan, M.A., L.T., is Headmaster, N. N. R. High School, Nangavaram, Trichy Dt. and has been a regular contributor to the *Vedanta Kesari.*

Swami Gnaneswarananda's article on 'Discrimination' is a notes of class talks on *Vivekachudamani* held at the Vedanta Society Chicago, on June 13, 1935. Some of his other talks were regularly published in the previous issues.

'A Retrospect and Value of the four Yogas' by Braj Bihari Nigam, Head of the Department of Philosophy, Government Art and Commerce College, Indore, is the fir[st] instalment of th…

Swami Harshananda is of the Ramakrishna Order.

Sri S. R. Bhatt is from Vallabh Vidya Nagar, Gujarat.

'Doctrine of Incarnation as expounded by Swami Vivekananda', by Sri K. R. Sundararajan, M.A., Dip. in Anthrop., Research Scholar, Department of Philosophy in the University of Madras, is an adaptation from his paper read at the Symposium on Swami Vivekananda conducted by the Department.

Dr. Eliot S. Deutsch, Ph.D. was a Faculty Fellow of American Institute of Indian Studies in 1963-64 at Deccan College, Poona and is now attached to the Department of Philosophy at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, New York, U.S.A. The article "The Nature of Scripture" by the author is published to give the readers how a Westerner approaches the subject and does not mean that we agree with all the views expressed therein.

Mrs. Devaki K. Menon, a former lecturer in Sanskrit at the Queen Mary's College, Madras, is from Ernakulam.

Sri M. V. Sridatta Sarma, M.A., is in the services of the Maharaja of Mysore. His studies on Indology have appeared in the *Vedanta Kesari* from time to time.

DISLOYAL ACTIVITIES

For a second time within a few months some employees of the Union Ministry have been caught indulging in passing on secret information to an official of a foreign mission in the Capital. (The first time it was in November 1963.) While the detection of the disloyal activities vouches for the vigilance being exercised by the Government over matters relating to national security, the recurrence of anti-national behaviour on the part of the employees has given rise to grave concern in the minds of the people.

Now the question that should engage the attention of people concerned is not cure but prevention. How effectively repetition of such activities can be prevented? As a corollary to the above the question as to what induces these people to behave disloyally to the country is also to be investigated. As far as a lay man can understand there seems to be only two reasons for such unscrupulous, nay traitorous behaviour, viz. (1) motive of gain, (2) allegiance to a foreign nation. If the former the attraction must have been too tempting to be resisted considering the risk that was involved, should they be found out. This naturally makes one wonder as to the rank of the employees that were caught in such activities. Was their rank so low that material gain alone could induce them to work against the country? If so it is time to see that such records do not come to the notice of such corruptible elements. If not the gravity of the offence becomes greater. In such a case the responsibility of the Ministry concerned increases. It becomes the bounden duty of persons responsible to make sure that only men tried and tested for their integrity and of long-standing reputation for loyalty are entertained, specially in that particular department, where the secret records are involved.

It also becomes incumbent now on those at the helm of affairs to screen and find out that there are no more black sheep in the fold.

Besides, a stern view of all acts of disloyalty should be taken and punishment, heavy enough to deter others from having recourse to such activities in future, whatever the motive, should be inflicted on the culprits. Unless such steps are taken promptly and the offenders are made an example of there is every chance of recurrence of such operations.

Though those who are betrayed do feel the treason sharply, yet the traitor stands in worse case of woe.

— SHAKESPEARE.

OBITUARY

It is with deep sorrow that we announce the passing away of Swami Vimuktananda, aged 64, at the Seth Sukhlal Karnani Hospital, Calcutta on the 16th December, 1964 at 12-50 a.m., after a protracted illness of nearly six weeks.

The Swami had a severe type of heart attack, on the night of 3rd November, 1964 and was immediately removed to the Hospital. But unfortunately the best medical aid was of no avail.

The Swami, a disciple of Srimat Swami Shivanandaji Maharaj, joined the Ramakrishna Order in 1922 at the Belur Math. He worked at different centres of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, viz., Sevashrama a Vrindavan, Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati etc. Thereafter being called upon by the authorities of the Headquarters, he started the monumental educational activities at Belur, viz., Sri Ramakrishna Mission Saradapitha, which has now a 1st Grade College, a B. T. College, a Polytechnic, a Junior Technical School, etc. and was its secretary till he passed away. These institutions bear eloquent testimony to his indefatigable energy, constructive genius, sacrificing spirit and love for the spread of general and technical education among the masses of the country.

His contribution to the publication of 'The Cultural Heritage of India', the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Memorial Works, was great. He was also the Assistant Secretary of the Holy Mother's Birth Centenary Committee during the centenary celebrations (1953-54). He was a Trustee of the Ramakrishna Math and a member of the Governing Body of the Ramakrishna Mission. In his demise the Organisation has sustained a great loss.

May his soul rest in peace!

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE FLUTE CALLS STILL: By Dilip Kumar Roy. Publishers: Allies Book Stall, Deccan Gymkhana, Poona-4. Pages: 360. Price: Rs. 6.50.

Today one need no more feel apologetic to speak or write of 'supernatural' happenings. The myth of reality being confined to the range of the physical sense has been long exploded and the sciences of today are busy enlarging their boundaries to keep up with the demands of the various kinds of 'psychic' phenomena that keep on precipitating themselves even in this age of the reasoning intellect. *The Flute Calls Still* is, for the most part, a record — in the form of letters — of the spiritual career of Indiradevi, co-founder of the Hari Krishna Mandir at Poona. These letters (constituting the first part of the book) from Indiradevi to her co-disciples describe her struggles and her gains in spiritual life to which she turned under dramatic circumstances, and contain many instructive passages.

The second part consists mainly of information about the Hari Krishna Mandir, its activities, visits by notable personalities etc. Letters from and to Sri Dilip Kumar Roy — the other founder of the Mandir — newspaper reports and diary notes comprise this section.

M. P. PANDIT.

ALL ELSE IS BONDAGE (Non-volitional living): By Wei Wu Wei. Publishers: Hong-kong University Press, Hong Kong. Pages: 55. Price: Rs. 5.50. Agents in India: Oxford University Press, Mount Road, Madras-2.

The reviewer of this unusual book had a peculiar experience when he relaxed for a while after reading a few pages. He found the mind not existent, as it were, for a few moments; there was no mental content, no direction.

There is a power because there is an Experience behind this writing. The writer believes in 'direct pointing at the truth, instead of explaining it'; for, 'the understanding required is not conceptual and therefore is not knowledge'. The subject is the Tao which is the object as well. Tao, like Brahman, can be realized but not known. This book contains a series of meditations which are a fine exercise for the subtilisation of the mind which is indispensable if one is to [illegible]

up into 'the Presence of the absence of volition which is Tao.' (P. 53)

The author draws upon some of the concepts in the Teaching of Sri Ramana Maharshi especially on the subject of the Self. He underlines the truth that liberation is not an attainment of a new state but a realization of what we always are but are not aware of. So too 'practice' is not a 'doing'; 'it is beyond doing and not-doing'.

A book not to be studied or read but simply to be allowed to grow on oneself.

M. P. PANDIT.

THE PROBLEM OF ENGLISH: By M. P. Desai Pp. 160. Price Rs. 1.50. Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad-14.

This is a compilation of the author's writings in the "Harijan", which dealt with the place of English in our school curriculum. The author has shown that the English as an all-India common language 'did not tend to nor work for a democratic order', and hence regards the 'replacement of English from its unnatural and therefore wrong position of being the medium of administration and higher education in the country as the most outstanding national venture' (P. 106). To those inspired by such an ideal, this book is of great utility.

S. RAJAGOPALAN.

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: HOMAGE: Publications Division. Government of India, Delhi-6. Pp. 131. Price Rs. 2.50.

This exceedingly well produced brochure records the world's homage to Jawaharlal Nehru, who had occupied in the hearts of millions of countrymen, a place second only to those occupied by the epic heroes in the past. But his passing away had not only made India the poorer, but the whole world has been affected deeply. For in truth as has been so feelingly expressed, Jawaharlal did not merely 'personify the highest qualities of his nation: his luminous intelligence had fused the experience, the moral values and the insights of East and West. He changed the very world we live in and changed us with it. His story is graven not only in his native earth, but had become woven into the stuff of other men's lives'.

This truly memorable publication includes also excerpts from his speeches and writings, and from his last will and testament, portraying his inimitable tribute to Ganga, the river of India, round which he felt, 'are intertwined India's hopes and fears, victories and defeats'.

S. RAJAGOPALAN.

RELATIONS AMONG RELIGIONS TODAY: Edited by Moses Jung, Swami Nikhilananda, and Herbert W. Schneidar. Pp. 178. Published by E. J. Brill, Leiden, Netherlands. (Price not stated).

This compilation is of outstanding merit. It is the result of a survey for upwards of 10 years and the product of 27 Seminars operating for a period of fifteen years on the Subject of 'Inter-Religious Relations'. The valuable data collected in the course of such a survey, which had been participated in by the various savants and scholars throughout the world, have been analysed and presented, if one may say so, in a tabloid form

Canon Law is taken up first. Then Buddhism is dealt with and is rightly claimed to have spread by persuasion alone (38). Confucianism insists not on 'religious imperialism but a reverent attitude towards all religions'. On Christianity, Mr. P. Chenchiah's views have been recapitulated and he pleads rightly for the assimilation of the eternal verities of Hindu religion by the Indian Christians. Swami Sankarananda says well that Hinduism stands for a grand symphony of religious ideals and scouts bigotry and fanaticism and makes a Christian a better Christian (P. 73). The votaries of Islam, Judaism, Sikhism, Zorostrianism, have made weighty contributions on the subjects.

The obstacles to understanding other religions, have been expounded with clarity by Ernest Benz, and Jacques Cuttat. Daniel Johnson Fleming's Code of Ethics (108-112) is a valuable part of this book.

Swami Nikhilananda aptly remarks 'our religious edifice should keep all its windows open so as to let fresh air from outside come in; but the wind must not sweep the edifice off its foundation'. (P. 130)

The contribution of the United Nations Organization towards evolving a world religion, is set out at p. 147 to p. 150, and the former Secretary-General had laid stress on the utility of religion in avoiding War.

We are still far from evolving a world religion. But readers of this book will scarcely fail to note the increasing tendency to work towards the consummation. The need for it could hardly be better put than it has been by Sir Francis Young Husband (P. 151) thus: 'No mere ethical code, political action or economic conditions or communication would make up for want of religion at the foundation of men's lives. But the religion which would thus be made the base of everything must be no mere priestcraft, or empty ceremonial or conformity to conventional tradition; it must be real religion, self-acquired and pro-

foundly felt, giving men an acute sense of their unity with one another and with a universe which is spiritual in nature and governed for good.' Who can deny that such an ideal one is to be found in the Vedanta of Hinduism?

S. RAJAGOPALAN.

WHAT SHALL WE DO ABOUT ENGLISH: By U. A. Asrani. The Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad-14. Pp. 48. Price 0.75 P.

This is an Academician's approach to the vexed question of the place of English in our country. The author is definitely against its being adopted as the medium of instruction, especially in the lower classes, but it is difficult to agree with him that doing so would involve a 'blind absorption of a foreign culture and its evils' (p. 46).

S. RAJAGOPALAN.

MARATHI

RIGVEDACHI OLAKH: By Gundopant Haribhakt. Publishers: G. M. Navathe, Gamdevi, Bombay 7. Pages 104. Price 1.50.

This is a very readable and informative introduction to the oldest scripture of the world—Rig Veda. The author draws attention to the error in the modern approach to the Veda through the gates of the Puranas, Brahmanas etc. He rightly points out that there is a big gap between the age of the Veda and that of the Upanishads and Brahmanas. The Puranas came still later and it would take one far away from the truth of the Rig Veda to study the hymns in terms of these later records, however much valuable they may be in themselves. The concepts of the Veda are shown to have undergone drastic changes by the time of the Puranas, e.g., *asura*. So too the gods whose nature and function have changed. The writer pleads for a direct approach to the Riks and provides a helpful guidance subjectwise, e.g., the gods of the Veda; the One Reality; Sacrifice, *Yajna*; the Supreme Light which is the aim of all endeavour; the twin planks of Satyam and Ritam to which the Rishis cling to in their journey of life; and oneness of all existence.

Sri Gundopant does not hesitate to differ from currently propagated theories e.g., on the true significance of Soma. We only regret that he does not go far enough to vindicate the claim of the ancients and establish the Rig Veda as essentially a Revealed Book of Knowledge. It is not just a record of the evolution of the Mind — *manance vikas* — but a testament of the spiritual evolution of a race. The institutions of the Veda e.g., Yajna, Soma, the gods like Indra, Agni, are eternal verities with perpetual significance to the man whose inner eye has opened. The hymns of the Rig Veda are a product of spiritual efflorescence and they reveal themselves as such to a straightforward approach. The book under review is a welcome contribution in this direction.

M. P. PANDIT

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA, ASANSOL

REPORT FOR THE YEARS FROM APRIL, 1962 TO MARCH, 1964

The activities of the above centre are (*a*) Cultural and Religious, (*b*) Philanthropic and (*c*) Educational. Daily worship, Aratrikam, celebration of birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother and Swami Vivekananda and holding public meetings formed part of the cultural and religious activities. Ramnam Sankirtan on Ekadasi days were regularly performed. Scriptural classes were held outside Asansol also.

The Ashrama distributed about Rs. 2,000 in cash and kind among needy persons during the period under review. Besides, the Mission sent relief to the tune of Rs. 4,000 (approximately) in cash and kind to the flood-stricken people during the rainy season.

The Ashrama runs a Higher Secondary Multipurpose School and two Junior Basic Schools. The Multipurpose School had 767 and 783 and the Junior Basic Schools I and II had 133 and 140 and 132 and 142 pupils respectively on their rolls during 1962-63 and 1963-64. The school library had 5,430 books at the end of the period under review. The School Final and Higher Secondary examination results of the School were uniformly good. In 1963 and 1964 the results were 100% pass.

The Ashrama has also a Students' Home where 30 boys were maintained.

The Ashrama celebrated the centenary of Swami Vivekananda on a grand scale. The Ashrama got prepared Swamiji's life in dolls and exhibited the same at various places all over India including Madras.

The management express their thanks to all sympathisers, donors and subscribers who have helped, and appeal to the generous public to continue their support so that the Ashrama may execute their new projects at an early date.

The birthday Tithipuja of Swami Vivekananda falls on Saturday, January 23, 1965

Editors : Swami Kailasananda and Swami Paratparananda

Published by : Swami Abjananda at Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras-4

[illegible] Madras-18

The

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This long a...

॥ नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यः ॥



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. . . Be bold and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease.
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE VEDANTA KESARI

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PANCADAŚĪ

CHAPTER II

कदाचित्पिहिते कर्णे श्रूयते शब्द आन्तरः । प्राणवायौ जाठराग्नौ जलपानेऽन्नभक्षणे ॥ ८ ॥
व्यज्यन्ते ह्यान्तरास्पर्शा मीलने चान्तरं तमः । उद्गारे रसगन्धौ चेत्यक्षाणामान्तरग्रहः ॥ ९ ॥

Kadācit, if at any time ; *karṇé,* in the ear ; *pihité,* when closed ; *prāṇavāyau,* in the *prāṇa* ; *jāṭharāgnau,* in the 'stomach fire' or digestive faculty ; *āntaraḥ,* inner ; *śabdaḥ,* sound ; *śrūyaté,* is heard. *Jalapāné,* in drinking water ; *annabhakṣaṇé,* eating food ; *āntaraḥ,* the inner ; *sparśāḥ,* touches ; *vyajyanté ca,* are felt. *Mīlané, ca,* when the eyes are shut ; *āntaraṁ,* inner ; *tamaḥ,* darkness ; (*vyajyaté,* is felt). *Udgāré,* when vomiting, *rasagandhau ca,* taste and odour ; (*vyajyeté,* are felt). *Iti,* in this wise ; *akṣāṇaṁ,* of the Jnanendriyas (organs of senses) ; *āntara,* inner ; *grahaḥ,* perception.

8 & 9. If at any time the ears are closed then the inner sound that is in the prana and in the 'stomach-fire' is heard. And, the feeling of touch is experienced inside while drinking water or eating food ; when the eyes are shut the darkness prevalent inside is felt ; and while vomitting are experienced the bad taste and the bad odour. In this wise are experienced the inner perceptions of the organs.

पञ्चोक्त्यादानगमनविसर्गानन्दकाः क्रियाः । कृषिवाणिज्यसेवाद्याः पञ्चस्वन्तर्भवन्ति हि ॥ १० ॥

Ukti, speech ; *ādāna,* accepting ; *gamana,* walking ; *visarga,* evacuating ; *ānandakā,* enjoying ; *panca,* five ; *kriyāḥ,* actions ; *hi,* prominent (are). *Pancasu,* in these five ; (*kriyāsu,* actions ;) *kṛṣi,* cultivating ; *vāṇijya,* trade ; *sevādyāḥ,* service and others ; *antarbhavanti,* are included.

10. Speech, grasping, walking, evacuating and enjoying are the five prominent

वाक्पाणिपादपायूपस्थैरक्षैस्तत्क्रियाजनिः । मुखादिगोळकेष्वास्ते तत्कर्मेन्द्रियपञ्चकम् ॥ ११ ॥

Vāk, organ of speech ; *pāṇi*, organ of grasping ; *pāda*, organ of movement ; *pāyu*, organ of evacuation ; *upasthaiḥ*, organ of enjoyment (by these) ; *akṣaiḥ*, organs ; *tatkriyā*, their several functions ; *janiḥ*, creation ; (*bhavati*, takes place). *Tat*, that ; *karmendriya*, organs of action ; *pancakaṁ*, five ; *mukhādi*, the mouth and other ; *goḷakeṣu*, gross effects ; *āsté*, is stationed.

11. By the organs of speech, grasping, movement, evacuation and pleasure are the respective functions performed. This group of five organs of action is established in its gross effect in the body such as mouth and other parts.

मनो दशेन्द्रियाध्यक्षं हृत्पद्मे गोळके स्थितम् । तच्चान्तःकरणं बाह्येष्वस्वातन्त्र्याद्विनेन्द्रियैः ॥ १२ ॥

Manaḥ, mind ; *daśendriya*, the ten organs ; *adhyakṣaṁ*, governor ; *tat*, that ; *hṛt-padmé*, in the lotus of the heart ; *goḷake*, place ; *sthitaṁ*, abides ; *bahyeṣu*, in the external (regions) ; *indriyairvinā*, without the help of the organs ; *aswātantryāt*, being not independent (to move) ; *tat*, that (mind) ; *antaḥkaraṇaṁ*, the inner organ ; (*kathyaté*, is called).

12. The mind is the governor of these ten organs and it abides in the place called the lotus of the heart. But being not independent to move in the external regions without the help of the organs, it (the mind) is called the *antaḥkaraṇa*, the inner organ.

अक्षेष्वर्थार्पितेष्वेतद्गुणदोषविचारकम् । सत्त्वं रजस्तमश्चास्य गुणा विक्रियते हि तैः ॥ १३ ॥

Akṣeṣu, the organs ; *artha*, the objects ; *arpiteṣu*, established in contact ; *etat*, this (mind) ; *guṇa*, the virtues ; *doṣa*, defects ; *vicārakaṁ*, discriminator ; (*bhavati*, becomes). *Asya*, of this ; *sattvaṁ*, the principle of purity ; *rajaḥ*, the principle of activity ; *tamaḥ*, the principle of inertia ; *guṇāḥ*, ingredients ; *hi*, because ; *taiḥ*, by these principles ; (*tat*, the mind) ; *vikriyaté*, undergoes change.

13. When the organs are in contact with their objects this mind becomes the discriminator as to whether such contact is virtuous or vicious. Again, this mind is made of three ingredients, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, as can be known by the mind's undergoing change, moved by these principles.

NOTE : What are the changes that mind undergoes moved by each principle is stated in the next few verses.

वैराग्यं क्षान्तिरौदार्यमित्याद्याः सत्त्वसम्भवाः । कामक्रोधौ लोभयत्नावित्याद्या रजसोत्थिताः ॥ १४ ॥

Vairāgyam, dispassion ; *kṣānti*, forbearance ; *audāryaṁ*, liberality, magnanimity ; *ityādyāḥ*, these and others ; *sattva* ; *sambhavāḥ*, are produced ; *kāma*, desire (for worldly things) ; *krodha*, anger ; *lobha*, greed ; *yatna*, effort (to gain transient pleasures) ; *ityādyāḥ*, these and others (which go to enhance worldly goods and enjoyments) ; *rajasaḥ*, from rajas ; *utthitāḥ*, born.

14. Dispassion, forbearance, magnanimity and other virtues are produced from *sattva* principle. Desire (for worldly things) and anger, greed and effort to gain worldly objects and other qualities (which only go to further one's worldly ambitions) are born from the principle of *rajas*.

PLACE OF THE GURU IN SPIRITUAL LIFE

AN INTERESTING question posed by thinkers, who somehow have a vague knowledge that divinity is the true nature of the human beings, is : 'If we are all sparks of the same divine Spirit, what need is there for one man to help another to realize it ?' It is an intelligent and sincere poser. One can feel that the inquirer is sincere. Perhaps a little of everything has disturbed such a mind — and there are so many new philosophies springing up, enough to confuse any ordinary man.

What is the answer for such an inquiry ? Let us probe the inquirer. How does he know that he is a spark of divinity ? Does he know from his own experience or from books or literature or other persons ? Well, if he has known that from other persons or books he has defeated his own question. For if he can believe in certain things said somewhere and by some persons what prevents him to believe in the necessity of trusting in the efficacy and usefulness of a spiritual guide, a person, perhaps, more regular in his prayers and meditations, sincere to the backbone in his spiritual life, and of pure and unsullied character ? This of course the inquirer cannot answer except by conceding that his assumption was wrong. Still he may feel that his query has gone unanswered. So let us turn to the practical side of the question. Let us take the example of a child busy with its play. The play has absorbed him and he forgets his studies. Is it not necessary that the mother should remind him of his studies ? In the spiritual world we are all children until we have reached the summits of realization. We need the guide, the Guru to remind us, nay actually help us overcome the obstacles in our path.

Why cannot we do so by our own efforts ? Maybe it is possible in very rare cases where the yearning for God is intense, where the renunciation is like a blazing fire, but for the ordinary aspirants a spiritual guide is essential. It is true that our nature is divine, that we are the children of Immortality. But are we aware of the fact ? How many days in a year are we conscious of this fact and how many minutes in a day ? We have to confess that it is very rarely that we are aware of it. The idea of spiritual practices is to become aware of this divinity more and more. Again, the spiritual paths are numerous, which one should a particular aspirant select ? All these intricate questions are solved by the true teacher by his insight into the life of the disciple. Otherwise, the aspirants will be tempted to try whatever path presents to them as alluring, as easy. It will be like digging for water now here and now there but not sufficiently until one reaches the springs. One has to be persevering and persisting if one has to achieve any result in spiritual life at all. Merely floating on the water will not get us the gems that lie on the bed of the ocean. One has to dive and dive deep says Sri Ramakrishna.

The *Kaṭhopaniṣad* warns the would-be aspirers after the spiritual life rather sternly : 'It is not given to many even to hear about this. And even hearing about It many do not understand. Wonderful is the teacher and fortunate is the obtainer of this teaching. Still more wonderful is the one who understands It when taught by a wise one.'[1] Many a ship of life has foundered on the unchartered seas of this life. A wise pilot is therefore incumbent. If even after repeated instructions we are not able to understand the Highest Spirit then how can we by our own effort reach it !

Taking for granted that some day the spark in us may blaze out if conditions become conducive, how do we know that other circumstances will allow it to burn ? If, for instance, a huge load of wet firewood is heaped over the

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[1] श्रवणायापि बहुभिर्यो न लभ्यः
शृण्वन्तोऽपि बहवो यं न विद्युः ।
आश्चर्यो वक्ता कुशलोऽस्य लब्धा
आश्चर्यो ज्ञाता कुशलानुशिष्टः । 2 7.

dying embers would they be able to consume the firewood? Never. The fire itself may be smothered and die out soon. But supposing one who knew how to kindle that spark, would wisely handle and make it glow brighter by adding dry leaves, were to help, would not then the same fire be able to burn even a forest? Man's condition is almost identical. A host of tendencies are smothering the divine spark and making it impossible to gain a better view of that divine glow. Lust and greed are the two chief burdens which weigh down on his mind making it impossible for him to be conscious of his divinity at all.

Sri Ramakrishna's parable of the grass-eating tiger very aptly describes man's condition. The tiger which as a cub was left in the midst of sheep, even before it had drunk its mother's milk, quietly followed the ways of the sheep — eating grass and bleating while threatened with danger. One day another tiger attacked the flock and when it saw a tiger bleating and running away, it was surprised. However, it caught hold of the grass-eating tiger and asked, 'why are you running away? You are a tiger like myself'. But the grass-eating tiger would not believe it. Then the other tiger dragged the latter to a pond; showed it their reflections in the water and then pushed some meat into its mouth and roared. The grass-eating tiger thus convinced of its nature and having tasted the meat, roared in response. Here is how the true teacher helps an aspirant. We have forgotten our true nature and caught in the meshes of the world believe ourselves to be sheep. So doubts arise in our minds even when we are told that we are divinity itself. The other tiger is the Guru who makes us aware of what we are.

Now, let us take another illustration. Swami Vivekananda gave the example of sowing a seed. 'Do you grow the plant?' he asked. No. The vitality to germinate is in the seed itself. You cannot infuse that vitality into it. 'What you can do ... put it in the proper ground, water it and ...elp it grow.' You only remove the impediments and obstacles in its path and allow it to grow of itself. Likewise the divine spark in man is to be felt, not simply theoretically known. The work of the Guru is to help the disciple feel It, realize It, by finding out and removing the impediments that block his path.

We have only to look at the way in which Sri Ramakrishna trained his disciples to understand this relation between the Guru and the *śiṣya*. There was first his selection of the proper disciples and then his training of them. He knew the past, present and future of those whom he took in his hand to mould as his disciples. It is not Sri Ramakrishna alone that possessed such powers. Jesus too had had it before him. Did not Jesus choose some of his disciples from fishermen? The Incarnations could at a glance know the nature of any man with whom they were brought in contact.

Knowing thus their inmost thoughts the Incarnations could correct their disciples whenever they would have gone wrong. Jesu[s] foretold his fold just a day or two prior to hi[s] crucifixion: 'One among you shall betra[y] me.' And they were sad that the Lord di[d] not believe in them. But was this prophes[y] not fulfilled? Again, he said to Peter, 'Tho[u] shalt deny me thrice before the cock crew,' and was it not fulfilled? Did not Peter staunchly deny that such a thing was possible fo[r] him? Yet how did it come to happen? Thi[s] shows Jesus could see not only what was goin[g] to take place for himself but also wha[t] thoughts were going to rise in the minds [of] those near him. This proves that the Inca[r]nations of God do have the power to kno[w] everything they want to know. Nothing li[es] hidden to their gaze. That is why they hav[e] the highest place as Gurus, as teachers [of] mankind, for all time.

Sri Ramakrishna's spiritual ministry was wonderful phenomena. It is like a panoram[a] of everchanging hues, ever attractive an[d] never tiring, the spectral play of colours, how[-]ever, pointing to the same goal-post viz., Go[d]. Sometimes he would make his young discipl[...]

roll on the ground with side-splitting laughter by his humour; at other times he would sing to them songs about the divine and transport them to an exalted region. Again, there would be discussions on the philosophies of the different sects at different times. And yet again he would urge them on to meditation and austere living. Once when a disciple said that he tried to meditate but that his meditation was not deep, was not undisturbed, Sri Ramakrishna wrote something on the disciple's tongue and sent him to the secluded Pancavati at Dakshineswar. The disciple even as he went towards the place was losing his outward consciousness and lost all outer consciousness as soon as he sat under that tree. He came to himself, to use a mundane expression, only when Sri Ramakrishna stroked his body from chest downwards. Numerous are the instances in the life of the Master and his disciples wherein the Master did accentuate the spiritual potential of the disciples.

The question may be asked : Why do you then say that there is divinity in every human being if it is to be attained by hard struggle and by the help of a teacher ? For the simple and obvious reason that an object cannot change its nature and remain the same. We have not heard of cold fire or hot ice, except as a way of expression. If fire were not hot, of what use is it then ? An object can manifest only what is inherent in it. If man was not divine he could never become one. But our experience is quite the opposite. We see divine personages manifesting themselves and human beings turned divine. So the proposition that man is not divine but attains divinity is also not true. What happens by the efforts is that he uncovers himself, discards the encrustations surrounding him one by one. The only acceptable and rational solution, therefore, is that man is divine, call him a spark of divinity or a child of God or what you will.

Now, we come to the assistance that the Guru really renders to the disciple. Spiritual life has some matters that are to be taken on trust, matters which you cannot fathom by reasoning. But it is not a fact that religious living is devoid of all reasoning. Reason is given the fullest scope in the Hindu religion and philosophy. You are free to question and inquire, but when it becomes a case of mere argumentation, there the ancient sages drew a line.

For reason would be blind when there was no comparison to make. Reasoning is possible and helpful as far as the phenomenal world is concerned. If you have to infer, you have to draw a parallel and what is there that can compare with the transcendental life ? If the transcendental can be reduced to the phenomenal it would no more remain transcendental ; in other words transcendental can never become the phenomenal. The laws of the phenomenal world can, therefore, never apply to the transcendental. The Atman, for instance, cannot be seen by the eye, not even the most powerful microscope can reveal it. But it is the inmost being of man. When man dies something goes out of him. It cannot be held back, for it is not visible. But that something, which was moving the body and making it live even prior to the moment of death, was in the body cannot be denied. Spiritual life deals with that being, the Atman. Therefore, as you would go to learn music from a musician and not from a professor of logic, so we have to learn about the science of the soul from a spiritual teacher alone. Because he knows or will find out what our aptitudes and what our inclinations are and guide us accordingly.

Human beings are not all alike ; they have different tastes and various natures. Perhaps, we all agree with this statement. Now, what is better — to allow man grow in his own natural way which comes easy to him or force him to follow a rigid, fixed and hidebound pattern of discipline, which surely will mutilate and destroy his nature ? The Hindu sages have thought it better to allow man grow in his own way towards God ; they did not try to modify his inherent nature. That is why there are so many paths, to approach God, described in the Hindu scriptures. So also about the form or formlessness of God that the aspirant likes

to worship. A particular form of God appeals to one man most and thereby he is able to concentrate his thoughts on God easier, whereas there may be other forms which though of the same Divine Spirit do not awaken any response in him. It is the Guru who finds out what form of the Deity suits each disciple, selects a mantra or a sacred formula by which he may call on Him, and instructs him how to proceed on his path. All this the Guru does with no motive at all. The Guru's sole desire is that the disciple should realize God, should get away from the meshes of Māyā, of the world. It is motiveless compassion, self-less love that drives the Guru to take all the trouble to awaken the disciple's spiritual potential. So we see what a high place the true Guru occupies in the realm of the spirit. He is looked upon as the father, mother, friend, philosopher and guide. Like a father the Guru chastises when we go wrong, like a loving mother he helps when we falter, like a friend he keeps us company in our difficulties and like a philosopher he advises when we are in a quandary.

From all these it is quite apparent that the Guru occupies a supreme position in the life of the spiritual aspirant. A great many hymns have been written on the Guru, of which the *Guru-Gita* is famous.

The *Muṇḍakopaniṣad* gives the description of a true teacher : a *śrotriya*, one well-versed in the scriptures and *brahmaniṣṭha,* established in Brahman.[2] Śri Śankara in his *Viveka-chūḍāmaṇi* enlarging on this concept and in keeping with the Śruti passages says that one possessed of the deep spirit of inquiry and renunciation should approach a Guru, 'who is versed in the Vedas, sinless, untouched by desire and a knower of Brahman *par excellence* ; who has withdrawn himself into Brahman ; who is calm, like the fire that has consumed its fuel ; who is an ocean of compassion that knows no reason and a friend of all good people who bow down before him'.[3] That is the true teacher approaching whom we are certain to find our path and abiding peace.

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[2] स गुरुमेवाभिगच्छेत्समित्पाणिः श्रोत्रियं ब्रह्मनिष्ठम् ॥
1. 2. 12.

[3] श्रोत्रियोऽवृजिनोऽकामहतो यो ब्रह्मवित्तमः ।
ब्रह्मण्युपरतः शान्तो निरिन्धन इवानलः ।
अहेतुकदयासिन्धुर्बन्धुरानमतां सताम् ॥ 33.

REMEMBER HIM CONSTANTLY

SWAMI BRAHMANANDA

The mind rules the senses. Therefore it must be controlled. Next, both mind and the intellect must be merged in the Atman. While you are in the society of holy men, your passions remain apparently dead, but they exist in a latent form. They are only wiped out completely after samadhi has been attained. Always be on your guard until you have transcended the mind.

'God is.' 'Religion is true.' These truths are not preached merely to make men moral or to keep society in order. Truly He is, He is the reality and He can be realized. There is no other truth greater than this. Don't be fanatics. You must be calm, tranquil and controlled.

Meditate four times regularly each day ; early in the morning, at midday, at sunset and at midnight. Be steadfast in your ideal, keep up the regularity of your practice under all conditions. Study a chapter of the Gita every day. If the mind is crowded with unnecessary thoughts and worries, it can be cleaned out by reading the Gita. I know this from my own experience.

— From *The Spiritual Teachings — Eternal Companion.*

MEMOIRS OF SWAMI ADBHUTANANDA

(A free translation of the Bengali book, *Smritikatha*)

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

WE HEARD the following account from Yogin Maharaj. We are not certain that it occurred at Vrindavan. But from the nature of the event it appears to us that it must have happened there only. 'One day it so happened that he (Lātu) simply vanished from our midst; he could not be traced for days. Mother's anxiety knew no bounds. After three days equally suddenly he reappeared. When asked "Where had you been these days?" there was no reply; he simply smiled. When Mother asked, he said, "On the bank of the Yamuna," and then, like a child, said, "I am extremely hungry. Give me something to eat." Mother quickly brought some food. He took it and immediately after disappeared without telling anyone anything. Mother remarked, "Lātu is queer all over".'

In January or February 1887, a daughter of Ramachandra Datta died of fire burns. The news reached Holy Mother. So she sent her favourite attendant Lātu to the bereaved parents in Calcutta for consolation.

CHAPTER XV

Reaching Calcutta, Lātu Maharaj went straight to Ramababu's house, where he stayed for three or four days. While he was staying there one day he went to Narendranath's house. There he had a talk with Narendra's mother, in the course of which he said, 'Look here, mother, brother Loren's mind is as pliant as a wheat-flour dough; whatever shape one wants to give it, it takes easily. In him a great power is surging. In whatever direction he applies his mind there it shines brilliantly.'

From Ramababu's residence he shifted to Baranagore Math. There Narendra (then Swami Vividishananda) told him one day, 'We have all taken Sannyasa after formally going through the *Viraja Homa*. I would like you also to do the same.' Lātu Maharaj readily agreed to Narendra's suggestion. It is customary to perform *śrāddha* ceremony for the forefathers, and even for oneself, before performing the *Viraja Homa*. While doing it Lātu Maharaj behaved rather strangely. Without uttering Sanskrit mantras according to the scriptures he plainly invoked the manes in his native *patois* and offered the articles, saying "Father dear, do come here, take your seat; accept my worship; take this food, this drink." (Though it appears so queer to us, even now people of the Chapra district offer *pinda* in the simple way. Lātu Maharaj might have followed that custom.) Having offered worship, food and drink to the manes in this simple way he sat down to perform the *Viraja*. "From his early boyhood strange was Lātu's character, strange his moods, strange his manners, stranger still were his love of God and his austerities for realizing Him. Remembering all these Swamiji (Narendra) gave him the name, Adbhutananda." (Abridged from the Introduction to *Satkatha* by Swami Saradananda).

After his Sannyasa Lātu Maharaj resided at the Baranagore Math for a year and a half without a break. He was then engaged in hard austerities along with his fellow disciples. We will dwell on his sadhana of this period in a later chapter; here we will recall a few facts about the Baranagore Math.

When the house was hired Lātu Maharaj was at Vrindavan. Yet we come across, in almost every published description of the Math, statements to the effect, 'After the disincarnation of the Master when the young devo-

tees were thinking whether they would return home and finish their studies first or they would immediately plunge into hard spiritual disciplines, the Baranagore Math house was hired for Lātu, Tārak and old brother Gopal who had already left their hearth and home and had no place to lay their heads on.'

One day Lātu Maharaj was asked at the house of Balaram babu about the origin of the Baranagore Math. In reply he said, 'I do not bother about all that. One day I heard it from brother Naren who said, "This Math and all that you see have their origin with Suresh Mitra." One day, it is heard, Suren babu requested brother Loren to have a place where Master's children could meet occasionally. Loren replied, "Why go for that? There are some among us who have no place to stand on. Can you do something for them? If need be, we also can go there for spiritual practices." At this Suren babu asked brother Loren how much that would cost. Loren said, "Whatever you used to give for the Cossipore Garden house would be sufficient for this purpose." Surendra babu agreed to pay something every month. Bhavanath was asked to find a suitable house. He engaged the haunted house of the Munśis on a monthly rental of Rs. 10/-. It was Bhavanath and the "suddenly appearing" Gopal who swept the house clean and made it habitable. Then he called brother Loren there and in three or four months the Math was started.' . . .

One day at Balaram babu's residence Lātu said with much regret, 'Stealing is such a bad habit that man loses the power to discriminate between good and evil. He goes to the length of stealing ornaments from temples, so callous he becomes! One day we received a letter at Vrindavan to the effect that from Balaram babu's house clothes used by the Master have been stolen. Hearing this Mother sent a reply saying, "Things stolen will not be recovered, it is evident. But please see what are left may not be lost." On receipt of this letter they sent all the things still with them to the Math.

'To make the Math popular Junior Gopal ("suddenly appearing") tried his best. He would meet all the devotees of Calcutta. It was he, in a way, who forced Loren to come to the Math and thus made it known to the public. Loren, on his part, would say, "Brothers, did he (Master) love you to be householders after all that?" In this way it was attraction for Loren that dragged others to the Math one by one. Had Loren been not there the Math would not have been popular, why, would not have lasted long.'

Let us narrate here a few reminiscences of Lātu Maharaj of this period :

'We were engaged in spiritual talks. If during that time Suresh babu, with whose money the Math was being maintained, appeared at the Math, Loren would instantly leave the talk and hide himself on the roof. At this Suresh babu would say, "Why do you look small and avoid me? It is Master's grace that forces me to give towards your expenses just a few trifling pies. Otherwise who am I to get the privilege of serving you?" Just mark Suresh babu's grand attitude — he (Master) makes him give, so he gives! Such an attitude is indeed rare. . . . Another day when Swamiji saw him coming he asked us to go to the roof, and said, "who will engage himself in useless gossips with him for a long time?" Accordingly all went up. Surendra babu came and found no one there. He could not restrain his tears, and cried out, "Seared by worldly worries, I come running just for a while to get the healing touch of your company, but if you treat me thus where shall I go?" Just feel his heart. He bore all the expenses of the Math. He could have forced his presence on us — he had every right thereto. Instead he only expressed how wounded he was at our behaviour. . . . At first Loren did not stay at the Math; brothers Sarot (Sarat), Śaśi, Niranjan, Baburam — all used to come and go. When they returned from Āntpur and took formal *Sannyasa,* it is heard, they stayed on at the Math. I have heard brother Loren was hard pressed during those days on account of a law-suit involving the family residence; so he could not live at the Math. When (in May 1887) Loren came to

the Math to reside permanently there, after having settled the troubles at home, other brothers started coming and residing at the Math; and this is why their guardians used to blame brother Loren, saying, "This young man is at the root of all evils. Our boys had settled down at home after the passing away of the Paramahamsa. This rogue of a Naren unsettled their minds and brought them all here to the Math. That fellow is their ring-leader." Some guardians used to come to the Math and heap abuses on brother Loren. He would say, "Why blame me! Here are your boys, you take them away. I have not kept them imprisoned here." The Master had spoken to the guardian of brother Sarada in the same vein. Brother Rakhal, I have heard, spoke directly to his father, "Please don't come here again, I am quite happy here." Brother Śaśi would leave the Math premises when he heard somebody from his house had come there. He would not meet them. Brother Sarada was also in the same mood. He went one step further — turned a wandering monk. . . . When brother Yogin returned from pilgrimage a tangible spiritual atmosphere was created in the Math. Then Balarama babu also started helping the Math. Master Mahaśaya also followed suit. We used to do *Madhukari Bhiksha* then i.e. beg little morsels of cooked food from house to house.'

A funny but a true picture of the Baranagore Math of this period has been drawn by Sri Mahendranath Datta. This we present here to the readers: 'The Math house is very old and dilapidated. The rooms of the ground floor have sunk down, in some places even below the ground level, and were the abode of snakes and jackals. The steps of the staircase to the first floor are mostly half gone. The surface of the floor of the rooms of the second storey is one yard visible here and one yard vanished there, exposing the rubble below. The shutters of the doors and windows are in major parts absent. The rafters of the roof have mostly fallen, the bricks being supported by split-bamboos. On all sides there are bramble bushes. It is truly a haunted house — the reality tallying exactly with the rumour. Approaching the first floor by the stair-case you find to the right a comparatively big room — it is known as the Kali Vedantin's room. Then climbing two more steps you find a small door which is the entrance to other rooms. Proceeding a little farther, in front is a small room which is the shrine, in front of which there is a closed portico, to the west of which is a big hall (which is what they call the demons' hall). Coming through the hall, to the northwest of it, is one small room where they store drinking water and where they take their meals. To still farther northwest of this room is the lavatory. To the east of the dining room is the kitchen. The articles used by the Master in the Cossipore garden house are all kept in the shrine. All the inmates sleep on the floor, the luxury of having a cot is unthinkable. Some two or three mat-like things — too coarse to be called mats — sewn together are the carpet that covers the floor of the "demons' hall". In a corner of this hall is rolled up a *durri* that could be entrusted to even a thief with confidence. Its warp is at one place and the woof at another, perhaps nodding to each other — in short, like a fisherman's net for catching big fish at sea. And the pillows? Why, Calcutta bricks, soft as stone, covered over with that mat-like thing that carpeted the "demons' hall". These are their rooms and their furniture.'

In this Math Lātu Maharaj occupied a seat in the "demons' hall".

One day a man of the Chapra District (might be that uncle of Lātu Maharaj who brought him to Calcutta) came and asked him to visit his native village once. Thus requested he gave a reply that was typical of him: "You do your duty, I know my path". With such force did he utter these words that the man left the Math compound with a heavy heart. When he went away some of the fellow disciples asked if he was really his uncle; at which he said, "Uncles of a monk are all dead".

After taking formal *sannyāsa* Lātu Maharaj, with shaven head and wearing ochre-dyed cloth went to Sri Ramachandra Datta's house

There was a private talk between Ramababu and Swami Abhedananda regarding spiritual disciplines. This was exaggerated in reports by many persons, as a result of which Kali Tapaswi (Abhedananda), became a target of criticism by many persons. To such a householder devotee Lātu Maharaj one day said, "What is wrong with brother Kali? Whatever the Master has made him understand he is bound to give expression to. Brother Kali has said what he understood. Why do you impute pride and egotism to him?" On another occasion hearing a fellow disciple of his unjustly criticizing Ramababu, he said, 'What has happened to most of you? The moment you disagree on any point with him you start blaming him. That is not desirable. I had been with him for a long time, I have never heard him speak like that, or anything which is contrary to Master's advice. Did he not, that day, express his mental attitude by singing that song, "The six philosophies could not fathom the Reality that is He". And this song was also sung by Master many a time. Isn't it?'

'At Baranagore Math there was an exchange of hot words among the brother-disciples in connexion with the shrine. That day a householder devotee said, "You rogues, what else will you do but act as priests to the photo of the Master, burning incense and waving lights before it, just as the orthodox priests do to the stone of Śītala?" At these words of the householder disciple brother Śaśi became extremely agitated and said, "The money of such a householder should not be touched with a barge-pole; it is an anathema to us." Brother Loren used to be amused when he saw brother Śaśi in anger. So he said smiling, "Go you rogue, beg and feed your Master." When brother Śaśi heard Loren of all say this there was no limit to his sorrow. Said he, "Very well, I would not touch a farthing of your money. I will beg and feed my Master." Still smiling Loren said, "And I suppose you will offer *luchi* to him by begging." Undaunted, replied Śaśi, "Yes, yes, I will offer *luchi* to him; moreover those offered *luchis* I will serve you to gulp." Then brother Loren, as if terribly excited, said, "No, by no means, will I allow this offering of *luchi* to him, while we have nothing to eat. I will throw away such Master of yours. If you cannot do it yourself, here I am going to throw him personally." Saying this he sprang up and started going towards the shrine. Brother Śaśi said something in English and with a bound ran after him. When I saw this development out of a trifling remark I was cut to the quick and tried to intercede saying, "Why, brother, are you opposed to Śaśi's desire? Let him go his own way and you yours." At this Loren said, "Hold your tongue, fool." A harsh retort was about to come out of my mouth when brother Loren laughed such a laugh that brother Śaśi too was covered with laughter. In two minutes all sat together to make arrangements for the worship of the Master.'

'One day an elderly devotee came to the Math and went on talking big and bossing over the young resident devotees and criticizing them for their leading the monastic life. Everyone respected him because of his age, so none gave him any retort. When, however, he came to Lātu Maharaj and addressed him as a beggar monk he gave him a bit of his mind by reminding him of a story Master had told Keshav babu (the noted Brahmo leader). Lātu Maharaj was then in a peculiar mood. The moment the gentleman said, "Hello, beggar of a monk", Lātu Maharaj retorted "Do you remember, Sir, the story Master narrated to Keshav babu of a fisher-woman feeling uneasy at the fragrance of flowers and not being able to sleep on that account and only then when her fish-basket sprinkled with water was given her could she sleep soundly, at the smell of fish? Your case, I see, is exactly like hers. Without yourself treading the path of dispassion and renunciation what will you understand of it that you dare to criticize us? You flippantly talked of the saint-king Janaka; but how many can be a Janaka?" This gave the critic a thorough jolt and he kept quiet.' (Narrated by Sri Haramohan Mitra).

(*To be continued*)

SEEING GOD IN EVERYTHING

SWAMI GNANESWARANANDA

THE IDEAL of a Jnani, if it can be expressed in very simple language, is to see the Truth, Brahman, everywhere. When a Jnani does not see anything but Brahman, does not touch anything but Brahman, does not hear anything but Brahman, in other words, when all his faculties have been completely absorbed and saturated by the divine Reality, he is supposed to have attained the state of Samadhi. The same thing applies in the case of a Bhakta, a lover of God. A devotee considers himself blessed if he sees his God in everything. If behind every manifestation, every phenomenon, he can perceive the existence of his beloved God, he remains intoxicated with divine Love.

In the history of India we find about half a dozen historical persons who were such God-intoxicated beings, who lived their lives in a continuous state of ecstasy of God-realization. In fact, we do not have to go very far for an illustration. The life of Sri Ramakrishna illustrates this constant communion with God, not only in a mystic sense, but very realistically and objectively. Sri Ramakrishna could perceive God behind every manifestation. He could see God behind the drunkard, who was having a good time getting drunk! He could see that it was God who was trying to fool him by playing a game of hide and seek, concealing Her identity, sometimes even behind the mask of a wicked person. He said: 'Mother, you cannot fool me by wearing masks. I see you distinctly.' Such realizations were not occasional events with Sri Ramakrishna. Constantly, behind everything, he perceived God. I could cite illustration after illustration to show you that it was God first, then anything else, that Sri Ramakrishna saw.

However, what I want to bring out is that when all the faculties have been completely saturated with the perception of Truth, life becomes fulfilled. Without that life is incomplete and it brings us nothing but sorrow, suffering and disappointment in the end. When the voice of Swami Vivekananda thundered out those wonderful words: 'Awake, arise, and stop not till the goal is reached!' what was the goal he pointed out? It is this: Within and without, subjectively and objectively, perceive God; see nothing but God, *hear nothing but the* voice of God, touch nothing but God, smell *nothing* but God and you become immortal. That is *immortality*, that is the enjoyment of heavenly bliss; *that* is peace; that is the goal of life.

I want to make a general and very bold statement: Unless and until the ideal is within yourself you cannot buy, borrow or pick it up anywhere in this world. Do you think that a person can understand the goodness, the kindness, of another unless he has these qualities developed within himself? We may think that without having these virtues within ourselves we can recognize and appreciate their existence in some one else. I doubt it very much. *You do not see anything which you do not carry within yourself. This applies* in the negative way also. If you cherish destructive qualities you will see them everywhere. A thief thinks this is a world of thieves. A selfish person ascribes selfish motives to everyone. He cannot imagine that anyone could be inspired by unselfish motives. Unless the ideal has been realized subjectively, within, you cannot perceive it anywhere else. If you want to contact God in the Himalayas, or in Tibet, or in a heaven somewhere hereafter, if it is your expectation that God is located in time and space you will be disappointed. If you really want to find God you have to discover Him within yourself. Then God will project Himself out on every phenomenon.

You perceive your God, Truth, Brahman, within yourself. You make yourself completely saturated with that, and then whatever goes out from you is that divine Element which you perceive within.

Brahman should be realized within first. Everything else can be suspended for the time being. Occupy yourself with nothing but the realization of the Self within. Do not bother your brain about what is going to happen to the rest of the world. That is the question that is raised time and again by people who do not want to do anything. Those are the people who will say that you are crazy if you seek God-realization, or if they have an opportunity of arguing with you they will say you are selfish. 'What will happen to the world if others do as you do?' is their cry. As if these people existed in this world only to take care of it! However, brushing these things aside, our first and foremost duty is to realize the Truth, the Self, within.

There are three types of aspirants who strive for the goal of Self-realization. They are the fast, the medium and the slow type. As far as I am concerned I'll be satisfied even if I am a slow type. My pride will not be wounded. I'll bless my stars and congratulate myself that some time I'm going to get there. There is no reason to be discouraged if we cannot follow the speed of a Buddha, a Ramakrishna, a Jesus Christ or other great mystics. Understand yourself, your calibre, your character and consider yourself blessed even if you are moving at a slow speed. Of course, there must always be that ambition, without haughtiness or impatience, to better our condition.

I have to tell you that vanity begets a sense of comparison and competition, and that has wrecked the ship of many a traveller on this ocean of life. Why should you compare yourself with anybody? No one else will take a step for you. Are you to be miserable because you think some one else is getting ahead of you? Will that make you go any faster?

We must, however, check up and see if we are proceeding or if we have fallen asleep by the roadside. If I am holding a brief for the slow type I must remind them of this: Convince yourself that you are progressing; do not fool yourself and others by thinking you are progressing when you are not. If we are never forgetful of the goal and are proceeding slowly and steadily there is no need for despair. It has been said that only one out of a million has heard anything regarding the existence of the highest Truth. Then, out of a million who have heard, there will be one who will make any attempt to achieve it, and out of a million who make the attempt, only one succeeds! If such is the goal we have every reason to congratulate ourselves if we can hold on at all. If we are progressing towards that goal, no matter how slowly, we are one in millions! That ought to pamper our vanity enough! One, out of millions in the universe!

With whatever speed we may be progressing towards the goal we must know that we have to realize the Truth *within* first, and then we will find it in the external world. In fact, whatever objects we find in the world are nothing but projections from within. We have discussed this many times from the viewpoint of psychology. Unless you have the flowers in your Buddhi (the determinative faculty of the mind) you will not be able to see them in the vase. Think of it. If such is the nature of our perception how can we expect to see God, to realize Truth, unless it is clearly perceived within? No matter what your ideal is (you may be a Bhakta, a lover of God, or a Jnani, a follower of the path of wisdom, or a Yogi, an adherent to the psychic method, or a Karmi, a worker for the ideal— in any case), your highest ideal has to be realized within first.

As we are now studying the 'Crest Jewel of Discrimination' by Shankaracharya, let us confine our observations to the realization of the Truth as laid down in Jnana Yoga: Brahman is the all in all. Nothing else exists. When you realize Brahman you are beyond birth and death, beyond time, space and causation. You enjoy Absolute Existence

Knowledge, and Bliss. Our constant endeavour must be to realize that Brahman within. We must convince ourselves that that Brahman is within us. Time and again it has been suggested to us in the course of our study of this book (*Vivekachudamani*) that when we identify our self with any of our functions the divinity appears according to the qualities and limitations of that which we accept as our self. For instance, we take our body for our self. When we use the word 'I' we have the conception of this body. I can say that at least 999 out of a thousand think of this body as the 'I', and for that reason the limitations of the body are superimposed on the real 'I'. Do I have to prove it? If you ask someone how much he weighs he will put his body on a scale and say: 'I weigh 145 lbs'. If you ask his height he will measure his body. Always he ascribes the qualities of his body to his self. He accepts the qualities of a finite thing as his self and yet expects to realize infinity. What a contradiction! Is it possible? If you think you are the body, how can you be Brahman? It does not require a great deal of practice to find out how faulty our self-consciousness is. I ask you to think of it. How often do we use this expression '*my* body', and yet if we are asked how much we weigh, we weigh the body and ascribe the weight of the body to our self. Why, even in language, do we commit this blunder? Meditate upon it. My body and I are related as possessor and possessed. When you ask me how much I weigh I do not weigh my coat and say, 'Two pounds'. I do not mean that we should disregard or torture the body, but why couldn't we disassociate, disentangle, our self-consciousness from the body and its functions?

Try to keep the 'I' free. Do not commit anything regarding the 'I'. Suppose I do not know anything about the 'I', but this much I know, — anything I mention by the word I is not it. I am not the body, functions, mind or thoughts; I am not constructive or destructive; I am not sometimes happy and sometimes sorrowful. If you can conceive of the 'I' as being free from all these limitations, if you can eliminate these things that are superimposed on your self-consciousness, you will attain tremendous strength. You will not be so afraid — and it is a great thing to be free from fear. Fear arises out of the superimposition of the body and functions on the self-consciousness, and the first benefit of disentanglement is freedom from the destructive influence of fear. One who identifies himself with his good name will be afraid of losing it and one who identifies himself with his body will be afraid of death. The old song, the repetition of the old song is: Disentangle your self from the bondage of superimposition. Superimposition means the imposition or the assumption of the qualities of something upon something else. I may add the weight of this little clip to this book but it is not part of the book. The Sanskrit expression is Adhyāsa. If someone says: 'I'm going to cut your head off,' you are frightened, but if he says he is going to take away your coat, you haven't that same fear. With your head off you think *you* are gone, not so with your coat. (*Question*: 'Swamiji, suppose somebody is going to cut your head off and you know your head is not you, still the sense of pain will cause you to anticipate fear.' *Swami*: 'The sense of pain is much milder than the knowledge of your own Identity.') The greatest of fears can be conquered by the power of discrimination.

As we continue, we gradually perceive that the 'I' is my self, and yet everything else is occupying its place, body, mind, emotions, etc. When the real 'I' is separated from the self-consciousness it enjoys a good rest and says: 'Well, let them impersonate me. Let the devils dance. When the devils stop dancing the King will appear.' I am drawing a simile from the old Sanskrit dramas. You will find there a lot of loud music and noise going on before the King makes his appearance. After the noise has subsided the King appears on the stage. Now this devil's dance is going on. The body occupies the stage and thinks he is the hero. The real 'I' says

'Alright, body, you go ahead and have your good time.' When all the false 'I's have been eliminated then appears a little glimpse of the real 'I', the Inspirer, the Witness of this whole drama of life. As long as we identify our self with the outer, the inner does not appear. No one can be free from fear, no one can be happy or have any rest until he has realized that. Until he has *seen* God on the throne of his heart there is no peace.

The Atman has nothing to do with the limitations of these. Its intrinsic bliss comes out when it is not interfered with by any quality. 'Sky', means Akasha, space. We speak of the sky of South America, the Mediterranean sky, and so forth, ascribing the qualities of the locality on the sky, but the sky is the same throughout. Sri Ramakrishna used to give the illustration of the Ganges. The Ganges flows from the Himalayas to the Bay of Bengal, over a territory of about 1,500 miles. Some will say: 'Our Ganges, Ghose's Ganges, Bose's Ganges, Guha's Ganges,' and so on, meaning the Ganges that flows by their houses. They have superimposed the qualities of the bank on the river, but it is the same one river. People often say: 'The Ganges of Calcutta is wider than the Ganges of Benares,' as you might say that the Hudson of Albany is different from the Hudson of New York City.

> 'The sky, divested of the hundred limiting adjuncts such as a jar, a pitcher, a receptacle for grains, a needle, and so forth, is one, and not diverse; exactly in a similar way the pure Brahman, when divested of egoism, etc., is verily One.'[1]
>
> —*Vivekachudamani*, 385.

If we eliminate all the qualities, what remains is one infinite sky. 'One, not diverse'. One everywhere. Realize it within, then you can perceive it in others.

[1] Translation by Swami Madhavananda, Published by Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati.

> 'The limiting adjuncts from Brahma down to a clump of grass are all simply unreal. Therefore one should realize one's own infinite Self as ever identified with one's own being.'
>
> —*Ibid.*, 386.

'Brahma,' is the first Creator, first person of the Hindu trinity. The limiting conditions do not add to or subtract from the Reality. From the Monistic viewpoint, even the Personal God is unreal.

I think most of you know the illustration of the rope-snake. A traveller once came to a village at dusk. Proceeding down the road he saw, a short distance ahead, a long, thick snake stretched across the road. He stopped short and cried out in terror: 'A snake! A snake!' An old villager was sitting nearby in front of his hut. He came along to assure the stranger that there were no snakes in his village, but the man would not be convinced. The old man sent for his lantern and said to the stranger: 'Come with me. I'll show you it is not a snake.' The trembling stranger followed, a few steps behind the old man. When they came to the place where the snake was lying, the old villager held his lantern down, and said: 'See?' The stranger, now thinking that it must be a dead snake, peered down to look at it, and the 'snake' proved to be a long, thick piece of rope!

The snake did not exist, but before he knew it was a rope it was snake for him. The reality of it was always rope. 'Universe', —there is no universe. It has the appearance, like the rope-snake. Brahman is its Reality.

The Personal Gods all have their reality in the Self. There is one entity that exists, the Self. Why couldn't we assert our 'I-ness'?

The fundamental element of consciousness is Chit. It has evolved itself, apparently, into these gross forms. From *Chit* all these have come, have evolved.

In the clear mind of virtue treason can find no hiding place.

— Sir P. Sidney.

LOGIC IN INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

P. NAGARAJA RAO

THE INDIAN philosophical systems are based on a cluster of insights born out of spiritual experience (*darśana*). The experience is not a process of discursive reasoning, nor is it a trance or any kind of psychic excitement. It is the unique experience of an integral transcendent consciousness. The experience is enshrined in the Vedas for *āstika darśanas* and it is there in the teaching of the prophets for Buddhism and Jainism. The metaphysical system is coherently elaborated round the insights in the form of a whole set of doctrines, ex-cogitated by the contemplative saints and classical system builders. The close association of the religious ideal, of *mokṣa* as the determining motivation of all the systems has overshadowed the logical excellence, and the powerful acuteness of arguments presented in the different systems sustaining the different view-points. The prejudice against religious motives must not make us blind to the logic in the Indian systems.

Though reason cannot discover the nature of ultimate Reality, the experience of it can be described in terms of reason. The nature of the experience, its significance and value, its plausibility, the supreme desirability of its pursuit are all explained in terms of logical arguments and rational discussion. The ultimate value of the ideal is sought to be established in terms of experience. It is defended against the opposite argument.

The Sānkhya and Yoga systems argue in the very beginning of the exposition of their system why men should philosophise and seek *mokṣa* and not other alluring, concrete ideals to overcome human suffering. The hedonistic ideal and ritualistic theory of paradise are criticized with admirable arguments. To rule out all Indian philosophical argumentation as designs to bolster up the doctrines of the system and as mere forms of rationalization is misleading as pointed out justly by Ninian Smart, in the book *Doctrines and Arguments in Indian Philosophy*.

Let us first look at the position of those who accept revelation as the supreme authority. Revelation is the transcript of the spiritual experience of the Ṛṣis in terms of words. The words are expressed in a language. They need to be interpreted not as we like it. They have to be interpreted in terms of the well known, determinative marks of purport (*tātparya lingas*). Among them *reasoning* is one of the most important marks. Though reasoning is only one of the determinated marks, it comes into operation at all stages. It is reasoning that has to determine which is to be taken as the initial passage and which should be conceived as the concluding passage, which repetition is purportful. Thus we see that reason has a very prominent role to play in the interpretation of the Vedas. One stands dazed at the tolerance and the power of the operation of reason, when one finds the same triple texts (the Upaniṣads, the Gītā and the Brahma Sūtra) have yielded different diametrically opposed systems of Vedanta. The authoritarianism of the revelation is only on the surface. Its meaning rests on the power of rational interpretation.

Further, the revelation does not clash with the report of the senses nor with the deliverances of inference. The sphere of the revelation is other than *perception* and *inference*. Jaimini declares that the Vedas are valid in respect of things which are not attainable through perception and inference (*aprāpte Śāstraṁ pramāṇaṁ*). Internal inconsistencies are removed by the rules of interpretation. Further, a thinker like Śankara looks upon revelation as a reminder of the ultimate ideal,

and not a producer of it. The *mokṣa* idea is taken as a hypothesis and spiritual experience is reinforced to authenticate it. Such a position can hardly be described as dogmatic.

Every one of the Indian Philosophical systems has its own logical basis. They have each a form of epistemology, with the help of which they seek to establish their ontological entities. Max Muller admires the forthrightness of the systems and says there is no trace of intellectual cowardice in the systems. Each system has not merely stated their tenets, but has also examined other rival systems and assigned reasons for rejecting them. They also answer the objections put forward by other systems against them. Thus the Hindu habit of writing commentaries on commentaries has added to the richness of the logical thought of the system. Hence the importance of the study of the classical polemical traits (*Vāda granthas*).

Further, reason as an instrument of human knowledge is given a proper status. Indian Philosophical thought has not been slow to determine the limitations of reason. Like Bradley in the West, Śankara and post-Śankara advaita thinkers have indicted the entire structure of discursive knowledge as essentially self-discrepant. Śri Harśa's celebrated critique has laid bare the self-contradictory nature of all concepts : *substance, attribute, relation etc.* Besides self-discrepancy reason is by its very nature non-conclusive. In a famous aphorism of the Vedānta Sūtra we have the inconclusiveness of reason declared. Reason can be refuted by better reason. This would go on indefinitely. Though the limitations of reason are affirmed, it is also emphasized that the deliverances of spiritual truths do not go against reason. Spiritual truths transcend human reason and are not instinctive and below the level of reason. Śankara and Vācaspati have declared 'that a hundred śrutis cannot make fire cold' nor 'a hundred śrutis turn red into blue'. The empirical validity of reason and its transcendence at the spiritual level are pointed to be remarkably consistent in the light of the three levels of experience described by Śankara. What we have to keep in mind and not ignore is that the three states of existence are not degrees of Reality. There are no degrees, but there are only states or levels of reality. The huge literature of Indian Philosophy pertaining to Logic and theory of knowledge regales the ardent student of metaphysics and on occasions baffles the most astute thinker. The *Kaṭha* declares that philosophical thinking is not for the intellectually indolent. The student must have a sharp understanding which should not only be free of the errors of mind, but also of the lusts of flesh and emotion.

The subtle nature of the logical problems of Indian theories is found in all systems. The Nyaya school has built a formidable bulwark of *pramāṇas* and dialectics to defend the frontiers of their system from attacks. They have also given a positive theory of knowledge to arrive at truth in the quest for the ultimate goal.

Hence, it is sheer dogmatism to describe Indian Philosophy either as pure religion or dry philosophy. It is a sound philosophy of religion which embodies a vision of truth and a way to realize it.

Give no time to worries or idle talk. Idle talk wastes much energy. In the Upanishads we read : 'Give up all vain talk.' Devote your time entirely to meditation upon the Atman. In the Gita it is said : 'Give your mind to Me, be My devotee, worship Me and bow down to Me.' Sri Ramakrishna used to say : 'Never squander the energy of your mind.' This means you must remember Him constantly. The worldly man is very careful not to squander his money. But he does not realize how he is squandering his mind.

— SWAMI BRAHMANANDA.

EDUCATION AT HIGHER LEVEL

O. R. KRISHNASWAMI

Education

THE LITERAL meaning of the term 'education' is the development of character or mental powers. Great persons like Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi, and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru have explained the deeper and comprehensive meaning of the term 'education'. Education is not mere dumping of information in one's head. 'If education were identical with information, the libraries,' says Swami Vivekananda, 'would be the greatest sages in the world and encyclopaedias the Rishis.'[1] It is a dynamic process. It means the development of one's mind, heart and soul. 'Education,' says Swami Vivekananda 'is the manifestation of the perfection already in man . . . All knowledge and all power are within. Man manifests knowledge, discovers it within himself.'[2]

'Education unfolds,' says Mrs. Jameson, 'the seed of immortality already sown within us, to develop to their fullest extent, the capacities of every kind with which God who made us has endowed us.'[3] So education is a process of self-development or self-growth, and 'not a discipline imposed from above . . . All true development is self-development.'[4] 'Like all living organisms, the individual grows by the impulse of his own self-development.'[5] The function of the teacher is to assist the growth by stimulation and guidance.

The Two Aspects of Education and Its Aim

Education has mainly two aspects, the cultural aspect which makes a person grow, and the productive aspect which makes a person do things. Both are essential.[6] The productive aspect quickens a person's service, but it should be accompanied by the cultural aspect, without which it is liable to be misdirected and misused. The cultural aspect of education, apart from ensuring proper application of productive skill lifts up the inward nature of a person to its fulfilment. It makes the man grow. It kindles in him a quest for perfection. 'Since nothing can be more perfect than divine perfection itself, the ultimate quest for perfection is literally the last and final end of education.'[7] Divine perfection means the realization of eternal life or self-realization. Hence it follows that 'the ultimate aim of education is self-realization, the fulfilment of man's intrinsic potentialities — in addition, the realization of eternal life. All proximate aims of education (such as development of knowledge and productive skills) take their direction from this ultimate aim which itself stands imperishable, eternal.'[8]

Spiritual Values

To enable us to achieve this ultimate aim, our educational system should be so built up as to inculcate spiritual values. The development of such values in us is the cultural aspect of education.

The development of spiritual values does not necessarily involve observance of religious ceremonies or even the study of scriptures. As Swami Vivekananda said, 'We may study all the books in the world, yet we may not understand a word of religion or spiritual life. We may talk and reason all our life, but we shall not understand a word of truth, until we

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[1] Quoted in *World Teachers on Education* by Sri T. S. Avinashilingam and Prof. K. Swaminathan, 1958, p. 114.

[2] *Education,* (1961) pp. 1 and 2, compiled by Sri T. S. Avinashilingam.

[3] Mrs. Jameson, "Education".

[4] *The Report of the University Education Commission,* 1949, Government of India, p. 37.

[6] Nehru, in a speech at Madras (1955).

[7] *Modern Philosophies of Education,* (1950), by John S. Brubacher, p. 107.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 112

experience it in ourselves.' Hence spirituality is not a matter of knowing scriptures and engaging in philosophical discussions. 'It is,' says Gandhiji, 'a matter of heart culture, of immeasurable strength.' It is the cultivation of heart that takes one to the highest place. By spiritual training Gandhiji means this education of heart.

Spiritual Training

How to cultivate the heart? By reading? No. Reading is only an intellectual training, a training of the mind. It, by itself, does not go far. Mere intellectual training rather makes men selfish and exploiting. Hence Gandhiji said, 'It is not through books that one could impart training of the spirit. Just as physical training can be imparted only through physical exercise and intellectual training through intellectual exercise, even so the training of the spirit is possible only through the exercise of the spirit.'[9]

Spiritual Qualities

This means development of such spiritual values or qualities as fearlessness, strength, purity of heart, steadfastness, uprightness, truthfulness, simplicity, modesty, boldness, forgiveness and forbearance. 'Fearlessness,' says Gandhiji, 'is the first requisite of spirituality.' Strength is goodness, weakness is sin.[10] It is the weakness that is the source of all sins and evils. So we should not be weak, but should be strong. Strength means fearlessness or boldness. 'Tell the truth boldly,'[11] exhorts Swami Vivekananda. Truth is strengthening. Such strength is developed only when we are pure. Purity means purity of thought, word and deed. 'Unless one practises absolute purity,' says Sri Ramakrishna, 'one cannot comprehend the subtle truths of spirituality.'[12]

A man is what he thinks. So thoughts should always be noble, says Thiruvalluvar. Pure and noble thoughts lead to noble deeds. Gandhiji has also emphasized the importance of purity. He said, 'Purity of personal life is an indispensable condition for building a sound education. . . . All our learning or recitation of the Vedas, correct knowledge of Sanskrit, Latin, Greek and what not will not avail us anything if they do not enable us to cultivate absolute purity of heart.'[13]

Besides purity we should have perseverence and steadfastness in what we consider as right and true. As one great saint has said, 'Let the sages blame or let them praise; let the Goddess of Fortune come or let Her go wherever she likes, let death come to-day or let it come in a hundred years, he indeed is the steady man who dares not move one inch from the way of truth.'[14]

Practical Measures

How we could inculcate these spiritual values and qualities in the students of our Institutions of higher education? This is a very difficult task. The spiritual training of students is a much more difficult matter than their physical and mental training. The educational system should be modified. It is now mainly a book-centred one. It should become life-centred. As Tagore has said, 'Education should be in full touch with our complete life, economical, intellectual, aesthetic, social and spiritual. ... True education is to realize at every step how our training and knowledge have organic connection with our surroundings.' The examination system and the system of recognition also need modification. They should be so evolved that in addition to knowledge these qualities of heart are also respected and evaluated.

1. *Teacher's Example*: Among the factors that contribute to the development of spiritual values in students, the most important

[9] *Gandhiji's Experiments in Education*, by Sri T. S. Avinashilingam, p. 10.

[10] *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, (1932), Volume III, p. 120.

[11] *Ibid.*, Volume VII, p. 77.

[12] *Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna*, 1954, ...

[13] *Vivekananda and Gandhi*, (1962), by Sri T. S. Avinashilingam, p. 27.

[14] *World Teachers on Education*, 1958, *op. cit.*,

one is the *teacher's example.* Teacher's personal life should be an ideal model worth emulating by his students. He is the living example before the students. His character should be a blazing fire. Swami Vivekananda said, 'Without the personal life of the teacher, there would be no education.'[15] Gandhiji has also emphasized this. He has said, 'The exercise of the spirit entirely depended on the life and character of the teacher.' The teacher should have faith in spiritual values. He should lead a pure life, and then only comes the value of his words. He should also be guided by service motive. His work must be simply out of love. He should be pure even when he is alone, and when no man observes him.[16]

2. *Examples of the Great* : The students should study and discuss the lives and sayings of great men like the Buddha, Thiruvalluvar, Christ, Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. An understanding of their words and deeds will be a source of great inspiration and strength. Such companionship of the holy and wise is one of the main elements of spiritual progress. The students should also have contacts and talks with living great men. Each of them may be encouraged to select a great man and to follow his noble example. An attempt to correct one's own self by the noble examples of the great ones is always good.[17]

3. *Reading from Great Books* : Once or twice in a week, after the morning prayer is over, selected passages from Kural, the Gita, the Bible and the Koran may be read out before the assembly of the students.

4. *Personal relationship between staff and students* : This is essential in building up character. The staff should develop genuine love and sympathy for the students. The residential institutions offer great scope for this. The advisory system is meant for this purpose.

5. *Celebration of festivals and functions* : Celebration of national and religious festivals such as the Independence Day, Republic Day, Sarvodaya Day, Sri Ramakrishna's Birthday etc. is a valuable educational process. It helps students to understand and appreciate our culture, traditions and ideals. An active participation in the activities connected with celebration arrangements is a valuable exercise in team spirit and group action.

6. *Prayers and Bhajan* : Regular Prayers and Bhajan constitute a valuable exercise in spirit. The thought of God comes to the mind and ennobles it.

7. *Physical and Recreational activities* : As Gandhiji said, 'The true education of the intellect can only come through a proper exercise and training of the bodily organs, e.g., hands, feet, eyes, ears, etc.' So students should regularly play games and do physical exercises so as to develop physical strength and build up their body as a basis for a proper and all-round development of their spiritual faculties. Recreational activities like drama, music, etc., are healthy outlets for students' emotions. There should be active participation by the students in these activities so as to develop their creative and artistic abilities.

8. *Student bodies* : Students' parliament and associations provide outlet for free thinking and expression and training in democracy. Group interaction helps to develop proper judgment of values in students. The staff should guide the students in keeping these bodies very active and purposeful. The activities of student bodies provide avenues through which students could participate in making decisions and carrying on joint undertakings. Habits of mutual trust and co-operation and qualities of fair play, patience, disinterestedness, consideration for others are acquired through practice. (The Report of the University Education Commission, 1949, p. 53).

9. *Community work* : This teaches students and staff the dignity of labour. Of all things that create love and understanding,

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15 *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda,* 1932, Volume V, p. 154.

16 *Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna,* Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras, 1954, p. 253.

17 Ibid., p. 127

nothing has been so effective as working together. If social inequalities and exploitation are to be avoided it is necessary that all should learn to work. Through community work, we gain faith in work and training in social sense and co-operative efforts.[18]

[18] *Vivekananda and Gandhi,* op. cit., p. 26.

10. *Village work* : This provides us with an opportunity for serving the society around us. Service to humanity is service to God. So village work should be considered as a form of worship. We should connect our institutions with our society by the living bonds of co-operation.

PANCARATRA SAMHITAS AND THEIR PHILOSOPHY

Br. MADHAVAN

THE PANCARATRA Saṁhitas are one of the source books of Vaishnavism. They are a vast collection of literature in Sanskrit containing in them philosophical, theological, sociological and linguistic traditions of one of the most important theistic sections of the Indian people viz., Vaiṣṇavism. Tradition has it that there were about 108 Pancarātra Saṁhitas with a total extent of one and a half crores of *slokas* in all. But, as has been the fate with many of our ancient treasures, a great portion of this literature too is lost to us now. Yāmuna Muni, the earliest South Indian authority on the subject quotes the following names of the Saṁhitas in his *Āgamaprāmāṇya* : Īśwara, Parama, Śāṇḍilya, Sanatkumāra, Indra Rātra and Padmodbhava Saṁhitas. Śri Rāmānuja too refers to Padma, Paushkara, Sāttvata and Viśvaksena Saṁhitas. His follower, the famous Vedanta Deśika of the 14th Century, wrote a work called the *Pancarātra Raksha* in which he is said to have mentioned the names of about 36 Pancarātra Saṁhitas.

There is much controversy amidst scholars as to the origin and antiquity of this branch of knowledge. However, there can be no two opinions as to the fact that the Pāncarātra doctrine is immemorial. We find mention of Pāncarātra rites in the Śatapata Brāhmaṇa (XIII. 6.1.) and also in the Śantiparva of the *Mahābhārata*. The late Dr. Surendranath Das Gupta also records evidence of the existence of Pāncarātra system, at least as early as the 2nd Century B.C., and of even the Greeks being converted to the Pāncarātra religion. (*A History of Indian Philosophy*, III. Vol. p. 19.) Whatever may be the origin and antiquity of the Pāncarātras, the influence they exerted on the religious and social life of the Hindus is immense. The religious practices of the present-day Hindus such as temple-going, image-worship and many other day-to-day observances bear a clear stamp of Vaishnavite influence.

It is regrettable that such an important branch of literature—which, as Dr. Schrader remarks in his *Introduction to Pancaratras*, 'was once cultivated in countries as far distant from each other as Kashmir, Orissa and Mysore'—is at present lying almost unknown to many, except for a few scholars in the South. Here, mention should of course be made of the laudable labours of Dr. Otto Schrader, Ex-Director of the Adyar Library, (his *Introduction to Pancharatra*) and Dr. Surendranath Das Gupta (his *A History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. III), in reviving the study of Pancarātras.

MEANING OF THE WORD 'PANCARATRA'

The word Pancarātra literally means 'five nights'. In fact Īśwara Saṁhita, one of the most important Saṁhitas of the system explains it in this literal sense, i.e., the Pancarātras are so called because it was the religion originally expounded by Lord Narayana in five nights to the five sages Shandilya, Aupagayana, Maunjāyana, Kaushika and Bharadvaja. But according to the *Narada Pancarātra* the name signifies 'five knowledges' or

topics treated in the system, viz., Tattva (Philosophy), Muktiprada (endowing Liberation), Bhaktiprada (bestowing Devotion), Yaugika (pertaining to Yoga) and Vaiśeshika (i.e., about the objects of the world). This latter explanation seems to be more in agreement with the traditional view as also the view of the *Ahirbudhnya Saṁhita* (Ch. XI), which alludes to the five-fold manifestation of God as Para, Vyūha, Vibhava, Antaryāmi and Arca aspects.

Philosophy : God and His Creation

Ultimate Reality, according to the Pancarātras, is Narayana who is also called variously as Vāsudeva, Viṣṇu, Bhagavān, and Paramātman. He is infinite, eternal, of the nature of pure consciousness and bliss, beyond all names and forms. The whole universe with its innumerable *jīvas* (souls) are projected, sustained and withdrawn into Himself by His divine power, Lakshmi, who is also called Viṣṇu Māyā. This Power of the Lord exists in Him in a relation of inseparable connection or inherence (*a-pṛthak sthita*). At the time of creation, this Śakti which existed in Him in an indistinguishable union, becomes manifest and a small portion of Her becomes the fundamental principles of creation viz., Kriya Śakti (acting power) and Bhūti Śakti (becoming power). This Kriya Śakti is identical with the Lord's 'will-to-do' which is technically known as 'Sudarśana'. It is this Sudarśana power or Kriya Śakti which vitalizes and governs the world. The Bhūti (becoming) Śakti of Lakshmi becomes the universe.

There are two stages in creation : (i) the Pure Creation (*śuddha sṛṣṭi*) and (ii) Non-pure Creation (*śuddhottara sṛṣṭi*). At the beginning of the Pure Creation, the six divine attributes of the Lord become manifest. Here it must be noted that the Ultimate Reality though Nirguna (in the sense that He is beyond the triad, Sattwa, Rajas, and Tamas, of the ordinary world), is endowed with 6 divine attributes which are the substance and instruments with which the Pure Creation is made. The divine attributes are : 1. Jñāna (knowledge), (2) Aiswarya (majesty), (3) Śakti (power), (4) Bala (strength), (5) Virya (virility) and (6) Tejas (splendour). The Ultimate Reality viewed as endowed with the above attributes and in the company of His consort, Lakshmi, is the highest conceivable form which the liberated souls enjoy in Vaikuṇtha, the Highest Abode. This is also the first of the four Vyūha-manifestations of Narayana known by the appellation Vāsudeva. From Vāsudeva emanate the other three Vyūhas viz., Sankarshana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha, in succession. The rest of the creation is the function of these Vyūhas and that is the reason why the Pāncharātra system is known as *catur-vyūha* doctrine. The Vyūhas come into being by the conglomeration of the above mentioned six divine attributes of the Lord. While Vāsudeva, as we have seen, has all the six attributes in their totality, Sankarshana has in Him a preponderance of Jñāna and Bala, Pradyumna has Aiswarya and Vīrya and Aniruddha has Tejas and Śakti predominating. Sankarshana functions as the superintendent of the souls and it is He who releases the souls from the shackles of Samsara. Pradyumna and Aniruddha are superintendents of the mind and the world respectively. The creation of all human beings as also the world is the joint function of Pradyumna and Aniruddha.

Apart from the four Vyūhas there are another three types of 'descents' that belong to the Pure Creation, viz., (i) the 39 Vibhava-avataras beginning with Padmanabha to Pātālaśayana (Sāttvata Saṁhita, IX Ch.), (ii) Antaryami (which is Aniruddha as the in-dweller of all souls) and (iii) Arca-Avataras (i.e., descent of the Lord into properly consecrated images).* All these pure emanations are the expression of the Lord's compassion towards His devotees by making Himself easily accessible to them. Lastly, to this Pure creation is ascribed the appearance of Vaikuntha with all its pure objects for the enjoyment of the liberated souls.

* We have mentioned here only the most important Avataras. There are still more of them, viz.,

The second phase of Creation, namely the Non-Pure Creation is the actual evolution of the cosmos which is somewhat similar to the view held by the Sāṁkhyas. The dual principles of Puruṣa and Prakṛti of the Sāṁkhya system are known in the Pancarātras as Kūṭastha Puruṣa and Māyā Śakti. Kūṭastha Puruṣa is an aggregate of all the individual souls who await rebirth on earth due to their past karma. Māyā Śakti has in it three constituents viz., Kāla (time) Niyati (the power that regulates everything in nature) and Guṇa (i.e., the triad, Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas). Both these above principles originate from Pradyumna and are handed over to Aniruddha who creates the entire universe by arranging the triple constituents of the Guṇa portion of Māyā Śakti in varying proportions and make the individual souls in the Kuṭastha enter them according to their past karma.

The order of evolution of Prakṛti is almost the same as in Sāṁkhya viz., from Avyakta (Prakṛti) evolves Mahat, from Mahat Ahaṁkara, from Ahaṁkara proceed a triad called Vaikārika, Taijasa and Bhūtadi (which are the *sattvic, rajasic* and *tamasic* forms of Ahaṁkāra) ; from Bhūtadi assisted by Taijasa evolve the five subtle elements (*panca tanmātras*) beginning with Śabda or sound-potential and from them the five gross elements (*panca bhūtas*) beginning with the Ākāśa (ether). Similarly, from Vaikārika assisted by Taijasa come the five organs of knowledge (*pañca jñānéndriyās*) and the five organs of action (*pañca karméndriyas*). The fundamental difference between the Sāṁkhya and the Pancarātra is that while the former ascribe the evolution of Prakṛti to the mere presence of Puruṣa, the latter consider it as the result of the will of God. The universe also being an evolution of the Lord's Śakti, the Lord is considered as the efficient, instrumental and material cause of the universe.

The Souls and Their Destiny

The souls are parts of Lakshmi or the Lord's Power and on liberation live in Vaikuṇṭha enjoying the eternal bliss in the constant company of the Lord. At the time of the Great Dissolution, when everything is withdrawn into Lakshmi, the Vaikuṇṭha with all its inhabitants also merge temporarily in the person of Lakshmi who remain 'in a close embrace' with the Absolute only to emerge again at the beginning of the next cycle. The karma-bound souls on the other hand, enter the Kūṭastha Puruṣa at the time of dissolution and are to be born again when the Kūṭastha Puruṣa is brought out as in the previous cycle, from Pradyumna. It should be noted here that even when all things enter into the Absolute at the time of the Mahāpralaya and remain indistinguishable, they do not become one with It — no, not even Lakshmi or the liberated *jīvas*. As explained earlier, they remain in the relation of unity-in-difference. It is this idea of unity-in-difference that became so systematized in the later Viśiṣṭādvaita philosophy of Ramanuja. It is interesting to note here that the Bṛhad Brahma Saṁhita is said to have prophesied the birth of Sri Ramanuja.

Religion

The purpose of human life, according to the Pancarātra is freedom from the shackles of Samsāra and the attainment of infinite bliss in the eternal company of the Lord. The Lord is all-powerful and it is only through His grace that one can attain salvation. Therefore, the religion of the Pāncarātrins is primarily a religion of self-surrender to God (Prapatti). Thus it enjoins the devotee to submit completely to the will of God and to have firm faith in His redeeming Grace. He should practice extreme humility and truthfulness and follow the injunctions of the Pancarātras. He should be initiated into the rites and worship of Viṣṇu by a proper Guru.

There are two types of Sadhana : (i) Jñāna and (ii) Dharma. The former again is of two stages, Paroksha jñāna (mediate knowledge) and Sākṣāt jñāna (immediate knowledge). Dharma is also of two types : (i) Vyavadhanavat (i.e., mediate worship through the Vibhutis of God) and (ii) Sakṣāt Ārādh

(immediate, through the worship of the Vyūhas through the mantra or sacred formula). An elaborate description of the forms of the Vyūhas is given in the Sāttvata Saṁhita (5, 9-21) for the sake of the devotees' meditation.

The eight-fold Yoga is also prescribed. The Yoga of the Pancarātras is almost similar to that of Patanjali with only slight difference. The aim of the Yogin is to attain union with the Lord and not aloofness as in Patanjala-Yoga. Yama and Niyama, as per the Pāncarātra System, consist of 10 virtues in each as against five of the Pātanjala-Yoga.

This is in short the philosophy and religion of the Pancarātras. It is the uniqueness of Hinduism that it offers to its votaries a variety of ways to reach the same Ultimate. She is like a Mother, who, as Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna aptly pointed out, cooks different dishes to suit the stomachs of her different babies. And, the Pāncarātra doctrine is indeed a rare delicacy partaking which many were blessed with deliverance from the mire of Māyā.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA ON THE *ROLE* OF YOUTH

G. VENKATESAN

'MEN, MEN — these are wanted : everything else will be ready, but strong, vigorous, believing young men, sincere to the backbone are wanted. A hundred such and the world becomes revolutionized.' This is the clarion call of Swami Vivekananda to the modern Indian youth.

The young generation of today will be the adults of tomorrow. The youth represents the life-blood of a nation ; they are the backbone of the country. They reflect the national potentiality, vitality, creativity and dynamism and they are the ones on whom rest the total responsibility of national progress. Since the country's growth obviously depends on their maturity, their knowledge and skill, their aspirations and endeavour and their devotion and sacrifice to the national cause, our young generation has to be carefully educated, trained and cultivated to carry the destiny of the land and fulfil the purpose of life. There is no wonder, therefore, that Swami Vivekananda attached greatest importance to the role of youth for the regeneration of India.

Swamiji's message to the youth is three-fold. (1) The youth should love his country and feel proud of its achievements. In other words the youth should imbibe the spirit of constructive patriotism. (2) They should understand fully the causes and forces that led to the downfall and degeneration of this glorious nation ; and (3) they should strive with missionary zeal for the regeneration of the country on the bedrock of our national genius i.e. spirituality.

Indian youth can and should legitimately feel proud of his country's greatness. While many an ancient civilisation and culture in the world have disappeared like houses of wax, Indian culture and vitality have survived the innumerable stresses and strains, trials and tribulations, invasions and subversions. Even though India is a very ancient country with a hoary past, it still is young with a profound message to deliver.

Swami Vivekananda is a shining example for the youth to follow, emulate and be inspired. His love for India is something unique, unparalleled in the history of India.

'There was one thing deep in the master's nature,' writes Sister Nivedita, 'that he himself never knew how to adjust. This was his love of his country and his resentment of her suffering. Throughout those years in which I saw him daily, the thought of India was to him like the air he breathed. True, he was a worker at foundations. He never used "nationality", nor proclaimed an era of "nation-making"; "man-making", he said, was his own task. But he was born a lover

and the queen of his adoration was his Motherland. Like a delicately-poised bell, thrilled and vibrated by every sound that falls upon it, was his heart to all that concerned her. Not a sob was heard within her shores that did not find in him a responsive echo . . . He was hard on her sins, unsparing of her want of worldly wisdom, but only because he felt these faults to be his own. And none, on the contrary, was ever so possessed by the vision of her greatness.'

Swami Vivekananda's emotional attachment to India inevitably flowed from his deep knowledge and keen understanding of the life-current of Indian history which gave him a clear vision, enormous strength and high hopes of India's mission to the world at large. India's spiritual greatness left its indelible imprints on the heart of Swamiji, as a remarkable saga of human evolution in the moral, religious and spiritual fields of experience. This was not a mere sentimental, narrow attachment to one's own nation. Far from it. It was born out of his moral conviction and deep realization of the singular contribution of the Indian genius to the world civilization. After his triumphal return from his mission in the west, in his very first public lecture on January 16, 1897 at Colombo, he gave expression to this conviction.

Indian youth can do no better homage to Swamiji than imbibe these energising patriotic virtues of love, respect and reverence to their motherland and dedicate themselves to the spiritual regeneration of the country.

To unravel the secret of the degradation of his contemporary India Swami Vivekananda wandered as a lonely pilgrim through the length and breadth of the land. Swamiji's peregrinations will ever remain green and his personality an inspiring picture for every well-trained youth of our country. During those extensive as well as intensive wanderings he saw first hand the battered and bruised body, the clouded and clustered mind of his beloved country. It was a real jolt to his sensitive mind. As India's past enthralled Swamiji to the heights of Holy Himalayas and gave him hope and confidence of India's mission to the world, so also India's contemporary backwardness, apathy, weakness, intolerance, blind aping of western culture, poverty and misery, sorrows and sufferings, that greeted him at every step during his five years of wanderings as a lonely Sanyasin, shocked his fine sentiments to their very foundations. Swami Vivekananda has given vigorous expression to the agony of his soul in his various epistles and talks.

This unmerited degradation of the spiritual splendour that was India caused Swami Vivekananda to go to the root of this problem. With the result of this passionate quest for truth Swamiji found that neglecting the past, narrow outlook, neglect of the masses, neglect of women, cultural intolerance and fanaticism, physical weakness, lack of faith in ourselves, lack of self-help, lack of obedience, selfishness and jealousy, lack of organising capacity, lack of love and fellow feeling were the reasons responsible for India's spiritual as well as material decline and downfall.

The Indian youth, therefore, should realize that no power in the universe can injure them unless they first injure themselves. Let us blame none for our own follies and failures. To the despondent and the discouraged youth Swamiji has given his command : 'Stand up, be bold, and take the blame on your own shoulders. Do not go about throwing mud at others ; for all the faults you suffer from, you are the sole and only cause.'

To be the harbingers of New India every young man and woman should first of all build his or her own physique, stronger. For Swamiji considered rightly that physical weakness has been the cause of at least one third of our miseries. Let every Indian youth hearken to his words of counsel : 'Our young men must be strong. Religion will come afterwards. Be strong, my young friends ; that is my advise to you. You will understand *Gita* better with your biceps, your muscles, a little stronger. You will understand the mighty genius and the mighty strength of Krishna better with a little of strong blood in you. You will understand the Upanishads better and the glory of the Atman, when your body stands

firm upon your feet, and you feel yourselves as men. What I want is muscles of iron and nerves of steel, inside which dwells a mind of the same material as that of which the thunderbolt is made.'

Building the physique is not enough. The youth should have unswerving faith in themselves. No use of deluding ourselves by saying that we are brought up weak and have no independence in anything. The idea of true *shraddhā* must be brought back once more to us, the faith in our own selves must be reawakened, and then only, all the problems which face our country will gradually be solved by ourselves. This is the great message of Swamiji to the youth. Faith in ourselves will make men of us, make gods of us. Swami Vivekananda therefore enjoins to 'Have faith that you are all born to do great things ! Each one of us will have to believe that every one else in the world has done his work, and the only work remaining to be done to make the world perfect has to be done by himself. This is the responsibility we have to take upon ourselves. Give up the awful disease that is creeping into our national blood, that idea of ridiculing everything, that loss of seriousness. Give that up. Be strong and have this *shraddhā,* and everything else is bound to follow.'

Young men and women must learn to obey. It is strange today that every one wants to command and none wants to obey. We are trying to become a nation of masters and leaders. This is a sure symptom of a serious national disease. Swamiji's warning in this regard is as fresh as when it was uttered : 'Always first learn to be a servant, and then you will be fit to be a master. If your superior orders you to throw yourself into a river and catch a crocodile, you must first obey and then reason with him. Even if the order be wrong, first obey and then contradict it. Cultivate the virtue of obedience, but you must not sacrifice your own faith.'

The youth must also learn to organise themselves because organisation means infinite power. Organising and co-ordinating the wills of the youth is the one sure way of making for a great future India. The following prophetic words of Swamiji are highly relevant today than ever before. 'Being of one mind is the secret of society. And the more you go on fighting and quarrelling about all trivialities such as "Dravidian" and "Aryan", and the question of Brahmanas and non-Brahmanas and all that the further you are off from that accumulation of energy and power which is going to make the future India. For mark you, the future India depends entirely upon that. This is the secret, accumulation of will power, co-ordination, bringing them all, as it were, into one focus.'

Having cultivated these virtues the youth must guard themselves scrupulously from falling an easy prey to the lurings of western civilisation ; nor should they be trapped by the tentacles of irrational orthodoxy. They should stear clear of the Scylla of old orthodoxy and the Charybdis of modern European civilization. Swamiji is not against gaining material knowledge, the power of organisation, bringing the best results out of the smallest causes. This perhaps to a certain extent we may learn from the West. But Swami Vivekananda is definitely up against sheepishly aping the western civilization. In his usual picturesque way he says : 'Imitation is not civilization. I may deck myself out in a Raja's dress ; but will that make me a Raja ? An ass in a lion's skin never makes for progress. It is verily the sign of awful degradation in a mass. Aye when a man has begun to hate himself, then the last blow has come. When a man has become to be ashamed of his ancesters, the end has come. Do not be dragged away out of this Indian life ; do not for a moment think that it will be better for India if all the Indians dressed, ate and behaved like another race.' No better warning could be given to the Indian youth than this.

Even before his voyage to the West, the creative genius of Swami Vivekananda had successfully tackled the staggering problem presented by the decadant India by a discovery which he made during his meditations

at Kanyakumari, towards the end of his wanderings. This discovery found expression in the message he subsequently preached to his own people and to the world at large. To the world it spoke the sublime language of a pure spirituality free from all credal and sectarian limitations. To his own country and particularly to its youth it spoke the language of practical spirituality of " man-making " and " character-building " with sacrifice and service as its motto, and freedom and equality as its theme. In fact, the revitalization of India on these lines with a view to build up a healthy body politic constituted Swamiji's national domestic policy. To this end he preached his message of practical down-to-earth Vedanta, laying stress on the need and the means to increase the energy of personal character, on self-control through development of the will and on the expression of this character energy in channels of patriotic service in every field of national endeavour, be it as a private citizen or a scholar, a businessman, or a social worker.

True, there can be nothing more difficult than transcending the self and rendering service to the noble cause of the nation. 'Are you sincere, unselfish, even unto death, and loving? Then fear not, not even death. As you go on your way serving others, you will, on a parallel line, advance in the path of knowledge. Work, work the idea, my brave, noble, good souls, — to the wheel, to the wheel put your shoulders! Stop not to look back for name, or fame or any such nonsense. Throw self overboard and work. . . . Even the least work done for others awakens the power within; even thinking the least good of others gradually instils into the heart the strength of a lion. I love you all ever so much, but I would wish you all die working for others — I should be rather glad to see you do that.' Let the youth of India, therefore, follow the foot steps of great and glorious men like Swami Vivekananda and cultivate the self-denying ordinance of serving all with a sense of sacrifice and devotion.

Swami Vivekananda had not only exhorted the youth to imbibe, cherish and nourish the 'wisdom of the Sages' but had shown the way of translating the virtues that he preached into practice. He had given the young men and women a dynamic plan of action. The most important service to which the youth of India must dedicate themselves is the uplift of the common masses. No nation can progress if its masses are neglected. Tens of thousands of youngmen and women must, therefore, feel one with Swamiji that millions and millions of the descendents of gods and of sages have become next-door neighbours to brutes, feel that millions are starving today and millions have been starving for ages, feel that ignorance has come over the land as a dark cloud. But feeling alone is not enough; feeling must lead to action. 'No amount of politics would be of any avail until the masses in India are once more well-educated, well-fed and well-cared for. If we want to regenerate India we must work for them,' says Swami Vivekananda.

But then how to work for them? What is the means to be followed in uplifting the masses? Education, says Swamiji, is the panacea of all social evils. By education he does not mean formal education, learning the three "R"s, confined within the four walls of the classroom, with a few carelessly chosen text books. His idea is 'to bring to the door of the meanest, the noble ideas that the human race has developed both in and out of India and let them think for themselves.' If poverty were the road-block, as it is today, then the youth should pick up courage and travel from village to village, from door to door of the poor and the ignorant 'and make the poor understand that mere sitting about idly won't do any more.' The highest truths of the Śāstras must be put before the people living in our villages and towns so that they can make use of them in their lives. Seek various ways, enjoins Swami Vivekananda with a rare insight of a prophet, 'to better the condition of all down to the Chandala, through oral teaching, and by means of maps, cameras, globes and such other accessories — can't that bring forth good in time? If the mountain do

not come to Mohammed, Mohammed must go to the mountain. The poor are too poor to come to schools and *pathasalas*.'

Thanks to the introduction of Community Development Programme and Panchayat Raj Scheme, Youth Clubs have been organised all throughout the country with the object of 'developing the youth into better people by making available to them the best knowledge and skill and building in them the attitudes and habits needed to produce intelligent, well informed and useful citizens, for the village, state, country and the world.' This is a significant step taken in the right direction to respond to the call of Swami Vivekananda. But care should be taken that these youth clubs develop into centres of social service as well as mediums to form good habits.

This no doubt is a promising development; but this is not enough. If development at the level of the pepole is to be vital and creative, it is imperative that all activities should be impelled by the *spirit of youth* which is now dissipating itself in our villages and towns in the absence of a creative outlet. If the country is to be reconstructed and rejuvenated and the new battle against hunger, disease and ignorance — infinitely more formidable than the one against the colonial rulers — is to be fought, the battle will have to be even more long drawn out. Only a band of young men with fiery missionary spirit, as visualised by Swami Vivekananda can successfully wage the new battle however formidable and long drawn out it may be.

THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN HUMAN LIFE

V. PERUMAL

THE TERM 'religion' has been discussed at length by Daniel and Solomon as well as by Tom, Dick and Harry. Though much has been said about religion from various points of view, by different people belonging to different parts of the globe and at different ages, it can be said with certainty that only a microscopic minority of the people have fully and properly understood the different shades of meaning of the term 'religion'. From time immemorial people affiliated to different schools of thought have defined the term religion in a thousand and one ways. Some definitions convey social theme, some of them imply philosophical significance, some connote spiritual concept, some are based on pre-conceived notion, some definitions are advanced according to the whims and fancies of the expounders, some are highly humorous creating a hilarious effect, some of them are based on rationality alone, while some others are based on mere faith, some definitions have been sponsored with an ulterior motive, some signify atheistic idea, some of them lack catholicity and only a few have universal appeal and stand to reason. Unless the definition has universality of outlook and sublimity of purpose and appeals to the head and heart of every civilized man under the sun, it is sure that the definition cannot stand the test of time.

An etymological analysis of the term 'religion' throws an appreciable flood of light on the subject under discussion and unambiguously clarifies the semantic aspect of the term. The word 'religion' consists of two distinct semantic units, viz., 're' and 'ligion'. The syllable 're' which signifies second, back, back to the original, again, repetition, anew, afresh and the like is employed as a prefix in many a word as in *re*turn (to give back), *re*join (join again), *re*-election (election for the second time), *re*-appear (appear once again), etc. The second unit of the word is 'ligion' (ligio), whose root can be conveniently traced to 'ligore' in *Latin*. From the etymological point of view, the words ligate, ligatus, ligatuse, ligable, ligament, ligatic, ligatura, ligatum and the like imply, to

bind, to unite, to assemble, to join, to associate, to mingle and the like. Hence, the precise meaning of the term 'religion' is the act of binding again. To amplify the significance, it means the holy attitude of binding the soul with the Almighty for the second time. God creates man as the mother gives birth to the child. After the birth of the child, though the mother and the baby are physically separated and they form two physical entities the child binds itself to its mother once again for tender care and nourishment. The same analogy will hold water in the case of relationship between God and man. God creates man, and after the creation, man tries to bind or unite himself with the Creator once again. This sacred act of binding for the second time is called religion. Just as there is sentimental attachment between child and mother, so too, there is spiritual attachment between man and God. The affinity between mother and child has intense social implications, whereas the relationship between man and the Almighty has divine significance.

Religion can be broadly defined as the practical aspect of spiritual science which aims at the oneness of God and man. Man is a social being because of his gregarious instinct ; he is a rational being because he has sense of discrimination ; he is a political being because of his civic sense ; similarly, he is a religious being because he possesses spiritual faculty. There are several sciences which directly deal with human beings. Physiology, anatomy, psychology, sociology and religion are instances in point. Physiology and anatomy deal with the physical aspect, psychology deals with the mental aspect, sociology deals with the social aspect and religion deals with the spiritual aspect of man. In fact, it scientifically explains the true meaning of the human being, and his existence, his relationship with God and universe and the like. Just as sociology deals with human association, religion deals with the association of man with God and the universe. One of the basic differences between man and animal is that the former is endowed with spiritual qualities which the latter unfortunately does not possess. So, it is crystal clear that, spiritually speaking, man is closely associated with religion from each and every point of view.

When a man feels thirsty he drinks water to quench his thirst ; when he feels hungry he eats food ; when he is lonely he longs for the company of his bosom friends ; when he has thirst for knowledge he studies various books and opens his intellectual windows to acquire knowledge and inspiration from different quarters. But, when he is spiritually thirsty, he needs philosophy and religion to slake his spiritual thirst. There cannot be any beauty and fragrance in the spiritual aspect of one's personality without philosophy and religion.

Philosophy and religion are only the two sides of a coin, the theoretical aspect is philosophy and the practical aspect is religion. The term 'philosophy' has been grossly misunderstood even by the intellectuals. From a layman's point of view, philosophy is something which is absolutely unconnected with human life ; from the materialist's point of view, philosophy is something that is connected with heaven and has nothing to do with this world ; from the academician's point of view, philosophy is the most useless and hopeless subject, unfortunately crept into the curriculam and left under the care of the professor of philosophy ; from the student's standpoint, it is gall and wormwood to him and it is his last resort in his attempt to seek admission into the university ; from a devotee's point of view, philosophy is meant not for study or understanding but for worship and veneration. This corroborates beyond doubt how unfortunately the term 'philosophy' has been notoriously misunderstood by the vast majority of the people belonging to different categories. The real significance of philosophy is 'the love of wisdom'. By wisdom, we mean that knowledge which illumines a person, intellectually to conceive the existence of God and feel Him in his heart of hearts.

Theory and practice should go together if they really want to serve the purpose. This maxim holds true in every human activity. T

illustrate : a good tennis player is one who knows all the rules and regulations of the game and at the same time can play skilfully without violating any of the rules. So, he is expected to be well-versed in the theoretical aspect of tennis viz., to know the rules and regulations and the etiquette of the game ; and at the same time be proficient in practical aspect viz., to know how to play the game skilfully in accordance with the rules and regulation. Neither an active player ignorant of the rules nor a master of rules who has not seen a tennis court can be considered a tennis player in the true sense of the term. Philosophy without religion is a beautiful flower without fragrance and religion without philosophy is a fragrant flower without beauty. Just as the pleasant combination of fragrance and beauty adds aesthetic value to the flower, so also the harmonious combination of philosophy and religion adds colour and divine flavour to human life. Francis Bacon vividly clarified the relationship between religion and philosophy as, 'A little philosophy inclineth man's mind to atheism, but depth in philosophy bringeth man's mind about to religion.' The long and the short of it is that philosophy and religion should be harmoniously wedded if humanity is to be benefited. The special feature of Indian culture is the happy blending of philosophy and religion.

Just as various categories of athletic activities are essential for the balanced physical development and the right type of education for intellectual improvement, so also, religion is essential for the spiritual growth of the individual. Whatever may be one's physical, mental, social and intellectual achievement, one's real personality will be certainly incomplete if there is a spiritual vacuum. Hence, the ultimate aim of religion is to yoke the human soul to the Almighty through Yoga, which subject has been properly dealt with in the *Bhagavad Gita.*

LORD SUBRAHMANYA

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

M. V. SRIDATTA SARMA

III

AMARASIMHA GIVES the several names assigned to Subrahmanya in his lexicon *Amarakoṣa.* He is *Kârtikeya,* because He was nursed and nurtured by the Pleiades. He is *Mahāsena* because He is the generalissimo of the celestial forces. As He was brought up in the midst of reeds, the caption *Śarajanma* was assigned to Him. It may also denote that He had His birth in watery regions (*sare jale vâ janma yasya*). *Ṣaḍânanaḥ* : He is the six faced Lord, being taken care of by the six wives of the fire-god (Agni). He is the child of Pārvati (*Pârvatînandanaḥ*).

He is *Skanda* in view of the fact that He destroys or dries up all enemies (*skandayati śatrūn śoṣayatîti*). It may also denote one who is born out of the radiance of Śiva. Śri Śankarācārya *in his* gloss on the *Viṣṇusahasranâma* interprets the term as one who flows as nectar, or dries up everything as wind (*amṛtarūpeṇa śravati vâyurūpeṇa śoṣayati vâ skandaḥ*). In view of the fact that He always upholds the path of righteousness, He is termed *Skandadhara.* In the Vibhūti Yoga of the Gita, Kṛṣṇa styles himself as Skanda. (*senânînâm aham skandaḥ* : Among commanders, I am Skanda.)[1]

He is *Senâni* in view of the celestial forces (good propensities) being directed by Him.

[1] Shiva says, 'Oh daughter of the mountain, by virtue of his conquering the three worlds, your son is famous as Skanda.'

आक्रम्य च यतोस्कन्दद्विक्रमेण जगत्त्रयम् ।

He is *Agnibhū*, because of His origin from the fire. In Vedic lore, Agni, Surya and Rudra are identical. The Śruti thus says "*rudro vai agniḥ*." Śiva is described in Sanskrit classics as "*yaḥ havir yasca hotri*." [That which is borne unto the gods, the duly offered oblations (indicative of fire or Agni) and that which offers the oblations (indicative of the priest)].

He is *Guha*, by virtue of the fact that He defends the celestial army against the missiles directed by the foes (*gūhati parāyudhebhyaḥ ātmasainyaṁ gopāyatīti*). The term *guhā* is of great significance in Vedanta. The inner space, which is the cavity of the heart and where the Paramatman resides and is free from sorrow is known as *guhā*. (*guhâm praviṣṭâvâtmânau hi taddarśanât*. *Brahma Sutra* I-2-11) In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, the body is described as *Brahmapura* on the analogy of the King's capital. Says the sage Yâjñavalkya in the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* thus : 'The heart, Your Majesty, is the Supreme Brahman' (*hṛdayam vai samrâṭ paramaṁ brahma*). This is the *daharâkaśa* that is spoken of in Vedanta.

guheti daharâkâśe vedânteṣu hi paṭhyate.
tanniṣṭo 'yam guhaḥ proktaḥ sarvahṛt kamalâsanaḥ.
(*Saṁkara Saṁhita*)

It is the eternal state that can neither be attained by work, nor off-spring, nor wealth. It could only be reached by renunciation. This is that state which is more exalted than heaven, shining in the cave of the heart. Only those aspirants that strive hard for it could secure access or entry into it.

na karmaṇâ na prajayâ dhanena tyâge-naike amṛtatvamânaśuḥ
pareṇa nâkaṁ nihitaṁ guhâyaṁ bibh-râjate yadyatayo viśanti.
Kaivalya Upaniṣad-3.

It is that space which is beyond the reach of the five elements. One has to realize the supreme Self, dwelling in the cavity of the heart, which is free from stains and is also one without a second.

na bhūmirāpo na ca vahnirasti na cânilo me 'sti na câmbaram ca.
evam viditvâ paramâtmarūpaṁ guhâ-śayaṁ niṣkaḷamadvitîyaṁ.
(*Op. Cit. 23*)

He is *Bahuleya* in view of his being fostered by the celestial damsels (Pleiades). (*bahu-lānām kṛttikânâm apatyaṁ*). As vanquisher of the fiend *Târaka*, the appellation *Târakajit* has been made. He is *Viśâkha* due to the fact that He was born in the constellation of that name (the sixteenth lunar mansion which consists of two stars). According to another interpreta-tion, it means one who extends Himself with a peacock (*vinâ pakṣiṇâ mayureṇa sâkhât vyâpnoti*). *Ṣâṇmâturaḥ* alludes to the six mothers. *Śaktidharah* is one who holds the Śakti weapon for defence.

He is *Kumara* by virtue of his being always a youngster (*sadâ bâlatvât kumâraḥ*). He is the destroyer of the vile and the mean (*kutṣitân mârayatîti*). As He is handsome and fair-looking like Cupid himself, He is Kumara. He is the bestower of riches on this earth from which fact, He is called Kumâra (*kau pṛthiv-yâṁ raṁ lakṣmîm dadâti*). As He is always a celibate and practises continence, He is term-ed Kumara. As, while yet an infant of seven days, the mighty Titan met death at His hands, so the pet name to this general is assigned. In the *Chāndogyopaniṣad* it is said that sage Narada received lessons in higher knowledge from Sanatkumâra (the eternal child), one of the mind-born sons of Brahma and saw the other shores of darkness. This Sanatkumâra is identified with Skanda.

Another epithet given to Him is *Kraun-cadâraṇaḥ* i.e. one who pierced the mountain Kraunca or a fiend bearing the same name.

IV

In Śaivāgama are given seventeen descrip-tions of Subrahmanya which are of great interest to the iconographist :

(a) *Tattvajnana Subrahmanya* : This represents the Shivashaktijnana Yoga. This is symbolical with the path of enlightenment in Shaiv...

Of the three phases of Shakti (desire, action and enlightenment), this idol is indicative of Jnana and holds cock and Shakti.

(b) *Skanda Subrahmanya*: (Holds Vajraayudha).

(c) *Agnijata Subrahmanya*: This form is with reference to the story of Subrahmanya's origin from the fire. It is identical with Agni and is represented as possessing two heads, the colour being that of smoke, and is described as being near the altar, holding a vessel of ghee and ladle or spoon. This is suggestive of the *Agnihotravidhi* and may be symbolical with the *kratu* (sacrifice) or the Vedic rites connected therewith as laid down in Mimamsa Shastra.

(d) *Saurabheya Subrahmanya*: This form is of pink colour and has four heads. The chief feature of this form is that it holds a bow of sugarcane and arrows of Utpala flowers.

(e) *Gangeya Subrahmanya*: This form may allude to the story of Subrahmanya's association with the Ganges. He is seated on a crocodile, wearing Nilotpala flowers, with rays resembling those of the rising sun. This god is the child of Ganges. The two pieces of wood that are used for making the fire (Arani) are in his hands.

(f) *Saravanodbhava Subrahmanya*: This form is described as being seated on a lion with a sugarcane bow and arrows of flowers and is associated with His genesis in the field of reeds.

(g) *Kartikeya Subrahmanya*: This form is seated on the Mayura or peacock.

(h) *Kumara Subrahmanya*: This is a figure standing with a crown on the head.

(i) *Shanmukha Subrahmanya*: This is a six-headed figure, possessing twelve hands and seated on the peacock with two spouses Jaya and Vijaya.

(j) *Taarakaari Subrahmanya*: This figure is seated on an elephant with missiles and ensign (cock), as destroyer of the fiend Taaraka.

(k) *Senaani Subrahmanya*: This is the standing figure of the generalissimo holding conch, discus, *abhaya* and *vara*.

(l) *Guha Subrahmanya*: This is the Kalyaanotsva vigraha. On the left side of Subrahmanya stands the spouse Jaya holding a lotus.

(m) *Brahmachari Subrahmanya*: This form is in the standing pose, wearing the tuft, sacred thread, girdle and loin cloth. In the right hand is held a staff, while on the left, the thunderbolt is held.

(n) *Deshika Subrahmanya*[2]: This figure is seated on a peacock. This has six hands, in two of which are held rosaries, in two Shakti weapons and the remaining two represent vara and abhaya mudras.

(o) *Kraunca Bhedana Subrahmanya*: In this form, we see the god sending up darts to pierce the Kraunca mountain.

(p) *Shikhivaahana Subrahmanya*: Subrahmanya is seated on a chariot drawn by a peacock. Two banners decorate the chariot and they are of red colour. In the front is seated a charioteer. This figure corresponds to the Surya image seated in the chariot and drawn by horses, with Aruna, the charioteer in the front.

(q) *Velaayudha Subrahmanya*: This form is described in the Shivaagama Shekhara, according to which Subrahmanya stands with his right hand holding a staff which rests on the ground. The left hand is placed near the waist.

One more form of Subrahmanya is described in the Śaivāgama. This is of golden colour and is indicative of the atmosphere (Vāyuroopa). This figure is assigned four hands, holding a cock, a lance (javelin), besides exhibiting the usual Vara (boon) and Abhaya (assurance) poses. In the terminology of the iconographer, this is styled Vâyudiśi Skanda. The Skānda Purâṇa mentions that Dattatreya is also a form of Subrahmanya, depicting the life of a Yogin. In view of his having selected a bride in the form of a hunter damsel (Valli), Subrahmanya is styled Valli Kalyana Murty. As he functioned as the spiritual leader, who led a crusade against all Avidyâ which impeded the path of Truth, Light and Immortality, he is called Senâpati.

V

In Skānda Purâṇa is narrated an interesting story about the mysteries underlying the form of Subrahmanya. Śiva addresses His consort Umā thus: 'Oh charming One, listen to the mystery that I am disclosing. I am that auspicious form bereft of all taint, while You

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[2] Legends say that Subrahmanya initiated Siva in the mysteries of Pranava Mantra. So he is styled Deshika.

are that imperishable Śakti (energy). While you represent the crude or radical forms of the word (Vāk), I am the affix or suffix that is attached to it. While you sound the significant word (Śabda), I for my part introduce indirectly to the thoughts (hint) its import (expressed or indicated or suggested). While you are the Universe itself (Jagat), I perform the functions of its Lord. By virtue of the five functions performed, I have five faces to indicate my offices as it were : *Sṛṣṭi* (projection), *Sthiti* (maintenance), *Laya* or dissolution, *Āvarana* (Veiling or concealment), and *Tirodhâna* or *vikṣepa* (removal of the veil). Though your offices are manifold, You have only a single face. By the commingling of the offices performed by both of us and also the faces, we see the result in him, the one with the six heads (faces) or Ṣaḍânana. With the performing of the five functions or *pancakṛtyas,* I will also indulge myself in a pastime (Leela).' (*Skānda Purâṇa* : Ch. XXXV-5-8).

In another passage of the Skānda Purâṇa, Śiva speaks to Umā thus : 'Oh, the One with the face resembling the full moon, Your child has strung or sewn cross-wise and length-wise the entire Universe in the same manner as beads are stretched out in a long line with the cord, and set together. In this Universe (both moving and unmoving), the heavenly regions serve him as the head. The skies on their part represent his navel. To him, the seven nether regions are as it were his feet. The fire, the sun and the moon are his eyes. The cardinal points are expressive of his shoulders. The entire vegetation will signify his tuft (hair). The elements serve him as sense organs, their field being the objects of the senses (worldly pleasures). The greatest of boons conferred by him is the faculty of articulation. Assuming an auspicious form with six heads, twelve arms and eighteen eyes, he thus indulges himself in the bestowal of favours for the three worlds.'

The Tamil Śaiva saints give different interpretations to the six faces of Subrahmanya (Ṣaṇmukha). In the version of Nakkirâr, one of these heads wards off darkness in the form of *Ajñāna,* while another is devoted to the conferment of boons to the devotees. A third takes away the *havis* (oblations) offered during the Yajñās. A fourth face is intended for the the collection of gifts from the devotees. The fifth face is devoted to the suppression of all evil forces. The sixth is engaged in divine communion with Valli and Devasena.

Aruṇagirinâthar in his *Tiruppukal* has said thus : 'One face is engaged in sporting with the peacock. The second face is busily engaged in giving Upadeśa of the *praṇava mantra* to Śiva. The third face confers blessings on the devotees. Another face is marked out for receiving the Śakti missile from the Devi. The fifth face is pre-occupied with the battle against the group of Titans headed by Surapadma. The last face is occupied in connection with the betrothal of Valli.'

In another account given by Kumaran Kuruppar in his *Kandar Kalivenba,* it is stated as follows : 'With one of the faces, Ṣaṇmukha is engaged in fight with Surapadma, while another is occupied with the function of warding off the straits of the devotees. The third is immersed in giving lessons from the Vedas to his pupils. The fourth of these is engaged in the removal of the bonds (*pâśa*) of impurities (*mala*) of souls.[3] The fifth is engaged in matrimony with the two celestial damsels Valli and Devasena. The last is associated with the conferment of boons on the Bhaktas.'

The writers of these works have also discussed at length the missiles used and their assignment. (*Tirumurughatṛppatai* and *Kandar Kalivenba*). When nihilism and other forms (non-Vedic) of religion flourished in Tamilnad, there was a religious upheaval, and Śaivism gained the way. Tirujñâna Sambandhar, who is believed to be an incarnation of Subrahmanya took a prominent role in the movement. According to the *Śaṁkaravijaya,*

[3] The fetters or the *paśas* of the soul have to be broken with a view to the acquisition of infinite knowledge and creative power. These cords are : (a) *mala* or false notion of finitude, (b) *karma* or action which unites a soul with the body, (c) *Maya* or cosmic power which is the material cause and (d) *Rodhaka sakti* by virtue of which the real nature of the soul remains concealed. (*Saiva Siddhanta*)

Kumarila, the great authority on Pūrva Mīmâmsa (the founder of the Bhâtta school) was an incarnation of Subrahmanya.

Certain writers hold the opinion that the six faces of Subrahmanya are symbolical with the six *cakras* described in Yogaśâstra from Mūlâdhâra to Ajña leading to the thousand-petalled Sahasrâra. Some other scholars are inclined to think that Subrahmanya is associated with the Sun myths. The six heads are indicative of the six seasons of the year, while the twelve hands convey the ideology of the twelve months of the year. The Kukkuta or the cock connotes the heralding (clarion call) of sunrise, while the multi-coloured peacock is symbolical with the luminous glory of the Sun. Subrahmanya with his two spouses may also indicate the three Śaktis (faculties) viz: *Jñāna* or knowledge, *Icchâ* or desire and *Kriyâ* or work.

The sage Viśvāmitra tells Sri Rama that he who hears at length the episode of Ganga as also the birth of the Divine Child nursed by the Pleiades will not only obtain for himself longevity, and continuity, but also enter into the realms of Skanda. (*Râmâyaṇa*: *Bâlakâṇḍa*).

'May that Subrahmanya, the ocean of compassion, the kinsman of the votaries, the conferer of beatitude, bless us for our betterment and for our absolution (by gaining moral and religious merit) in the same manner as a father acts (does) towards his son.'

Subrahmanyaḥ kṛpâsindhuḥ bhakta-bandhusśivaṁkaraḥ
Śreyasé bhūyasé asmât sa naḥ piteva sūnavé.
(Skandavedapâdastava).

THE GLORY OF THE LORD'S PADUKAS

K. E. PARTHASARATHI

About two miles from Rameswaram, there is a place called Rama Pāduka. There the Pādukas of Sri Rama have been installed for worship. 'Pāduka' means 'footguard'. The Pādukas are the sandals of the Lord and are called as such as they guard the Lord's feet.

The literature on the Avataras or the Incarnations of the Lord indicates that the Pādukas had their origin along with the theory of Incarnation. But it was only in the Rāmāvatara that they attained great prominence and have continued to enjoy it down to the present day.

After Rama was banished to the forest, Bharata who was away from the capital came to know of it. Extremely distressed at the action of his mother which brought about the catastrophe, Bharata resolved to bring Rama back. Accordingly he set out to the forest. As no amount of persuasion on the part of Bharata was of any avail, Vasiṣṭa, the preceptor suggested that he might rule under Rama's authority as his deputy. Protesting against this suggestion, Bharata requested Rama to grant him his footwear in the belief that they would be able to look after the interests of the kingdom in the absence of Rama. Accordingly Rama gave his sandals to Bharata. According to Champu Ramayana of Bhoja, Bharata obtained two valuable crowns in the shape of the sandals of Rama.

On return to Ayodhya Bharata found it as if a deserted place, on account of the absence of Rama. Bharata moved to Nandigrama, a village on the outskirts of Ayodhya with the approval of Vasiṣṭa. There he performed *pattābhisheka* to the Pādukas. At the same time, he proclaimed that he would bring all matters of the state to their sacred presence, seek their advice, and govern the kingdom in the patient expectation of the day when they would be placed once more under Rama's feet. The rule of the Pādukas lasted for 14 years.

Tulasidas in his *Rama Charita Manas* has compared the Pādukas to the watchguards looking after the Kosala kingdom. One Pāduka represented 'RA' and the other 'MA'. They were like two eyes — one eye watching that matters did not go wrong anywhere and the other that the progress and prosperity of the kingdom were maintained.

Yudhiṣṭhira praises the glory and greatness of the Pādukas of Krishna as follows: 'The air of the wooden sandals you wear destroy all evil. The holy persons, who constantly worship them, extol them, obtain release from the bondage of *samsara*. They even get worldly prosperity, if they seek for it. Others do not get either.'

The Pādukas are given the name of 'Śaṭhajit' or 'Śaṭhāri'. They control the mind of the devotee removing all impurities and foster devotion to the Lord. The practice of worshipping the Pādukas of holy men has come to stay. The sandals could be moved from place to place and worshipped by the devotees according to their convenience and to their heart's content. Worship of the Pādukas therefore implies equal reverence as to the worship of the Lord's feet, as they are deemed to be worthy and valuable substitutes for the latter.

One who is imbued with intense devotion and does service or *kainkarya* to the Lord or His devotees is generally termed Pāduka. The mystic, Nammalwar was called the Pāduka of the Lord. Similarly Madhurakavi Alwar, to whom Nammalwar was everything, was the Pāduka of the latter.

Vedanta Deśika, the poet-philosopher once when crowned with Lord Ranganatha's Pāduka at Srirangam, received great inspiration and composed the poem 'Pāduka Sahasra' consisting of 1,008 ślokas overnight in glorification of the Pādukas.

The Pādukas constitute a glorious and charming personality to Deśika. The Pādukas function in two capacities. In their individual capacity they act as the servant of the Lord. In their social capacity they act as the liaison between the Lord and His devotees.

The Pādukas are both a concept and truth. They are a pointer to the Bhaktas as to the manner in which service should be rendered to the feet of the Lord. In the worship of the Pādukas the devotees could see a reflection of the attributes of the Lord, such as goodness, '*dayā*' '*vātsalya*', '*soulabhya*' etc. Kulasekara Alwar, the author of *Mukundamala* yearned to be an inseparable *acetana* nearest to God.

God is pleased with man's service. He is so pleased with his service that in His pleasure, He regards the serving man as His equal, comrade — nay as His very self. That pleasure is His grace and mercy. The Pādukas stand as much for that service as for the law of that service. It has been aptly described, 'The will of God is the way of Pāduka. It serves as He wills and He desires as it serves.'

The Pādukas are guardians of both the Lord and His devotees. They bring God and the souls together. They are in the words of Deśika, 'foot-guards' of God and the 'head-guards' of souls. For the attainment of the Lord, Jnana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga etc. are all difficult *sādhanas*. The Pādukas show a short cut and make matters easy. Sri Krishna declares in the Bhagavad Gītā, 'I undertake to secure the Yogakshema of those who meditate on Me and worship Me alone, and who are ever devoted to Me.' The Pādukas are considered to play the same role and ensure happiness of all.

The feet of the Lord always symbolise His mercy. The Pādukas also represent His mercy in extension. According to Deśika the extension stands for the descent of the Lord and the ascent of the *jīva*. The descent of the Lord is for the purpose of conferring salvation. The ascent of the *jīva* is to crown himself with the Pādukas and attain salvation.

The glory of the Pāduka Rajya can be known from Valmiki's Ramayana. Bharata's mention to Rama about the state of the kingdom on the latter's return to Ayodhya describes this. There was complete amity, contentment, and happiness during that time.

Kaikeyi cherished an intense desire to crown Bharata as Yuvaraja. But Bharata was happy to be crowned with the Pādukas of Rama. Further, the Pādukas brought Bharata undying glory and honour and as a result, enhanced the fame of the Raghu race.

The Pādukas take their status and rank along with Garuḍa. Garuḍa is *vedaswarūpa.* The Pādukas are *vedamaya.* The distinction is that the Pādukas are a permanent carrier of the Lord while Garuḍa is only an occasional carrier. Hence the glory of the Pādukas.

Deśika devoted his life solely to the service of God and His devotees. In the Pādukas he saw not only enchanting spiritual beauty but also the glory of philosophy and religion and of Vedas and Vedantas in their proper perspective.

A GREAT SHORT STORY

N. SESHADRINATHAN

WHAT OTHER knowledge can a mature man wish to have, than to know what happens to one after death? Is the soul a separate entity apart from the body? Or is it part and parcel of the body, inseparable, one from the other? This query has puzzled man from time immemorial. The religious man has accepted the existence of a soul apart from the body. The scientist is not able to think in terms of a separate existence for the soul. Life in the body is the resultant activity of the physical and chemical make up of matter in such a way as to react to the environment in that peculiar manner which gives us the impression of life. In spite of this scientific explanation, the mature man finds it difficult to avoid thinking of the soul as separate from the gross body, just as it is difficult to identify a man living in a house with the house. For the consciousness of man is so far developed that he is able to view the body and its actions and thoughts in a critical way as if from a post outside the body. The scientist will say that to develop this consciousness to such an extent as to feel the existence of a soul distinct from the body, a person has to gather sufficient experience in life through the first few years after birth; till then the individual does not have enough of the 'I' to feel the soul apart from the body. This argument is not proof enough against the separate existence of the soul.

Life cannot be thought of except in relation to time. No wonder Time is read with a capital letter in the Vedas. Time drags life unto death only to bring the dead back to build life again. The distinction between life and death is therefore only apparent. This merging of life into death or matter, or of the merging of death into life again is an eternal process which has no end or beginning. And Time has no beginning or end, since it is infinite. *Kāla* is identified with Death in the scriptures for this reason. *Kāla* is the inevitable consequence of life. Naturally, if one wants to know what happens after death one has to ask the god of Death.

There is the allegory of Naciketa to bring out this metaphysical truth to the lay minds. The god of Death does not want to impart this knowledge to Naciketa without testing the latter for his fitness to obtain the knowledge. Yama dissuades Naciketa by offering him the full quota of the sensual enjoyments that the human life is capable of. No! Naciketa is not to be deceived. He has come with a fixed purpose, with mind as keen as the fine end of a kuśa grass. He says 'Sire, keep all these, the wealth, and sense enjoyments, for yourself. No man can be made happy by the acquisition of wealth. Being in your presence shall we think of the possession of wealth, or ask for long life; for one who has seen thee, wealth and long life automatically come. Only

that boon which I have chosen is acceptable to me.'

What a spirited reply and yet so humble! The consciousness of death precludes all thought of life and its enjoyments; they pale into insignificance. All life submits unto death and vanishes as easily as they are born, like bubbles on the surface of water. But the bubbles are in the water. They appear from the water and disappear into the water.

In the process of thinking, concentration excludes unnecessary elements from one's attention; many unrelated sensory impressions are eliminated. In the course of life one can so adjust the effect of the emotions that a mental balance is obtained in dealing with situations. In civilized life such control over the emotions is a factor that is necessary and of immense value.

By constant and systematic training, a mental balance can be attained. This may be done with the specific purpose of solving the problems of life; but there is a spiritual aim which may be immensely superior to this.

Our emotions are generated by desires. Desires are born of the activity of the sense organs. The sense organs constantly turn our attention to the objects of life. Our outlook may be individual, and the desires arising from sense objects may induce the individual to satisfy his desires and obtain pleasure. Pleasure is always followed by pain and suffering. When one thinks in terms of the family, the individual pleasure is sacrificed and result in a kind of joy which is superior to the individual pleasure. This sacrifice may widen and extend, being directed towards society in which he lives, and one may offer voluntarily to sacrifice one's many more pleasure-giving desires. There is joy in it, and this joy is much greater than the previous type of pleasure.

Thinking in terms of goodness may expand and include the whole universe. Here the self gradually extends its identification more and more till the mind tries to reach Infinity. In such moments of identity the individual loses his own identity which may get merged in Infinity. In such moments the body loses all external consciousness and the sense impulses may have no effect on the person. Such mystic moments are limited, but concentrated with unlimited joy — a joy of the highest intensity which they say, the saints and yogis alone have enjoyed. This aspect of self is present in every person nay, in every life, because the origin of all life is one, but, only in rare individuals does it get manifested. In them the worldly aspect of the self practically remains at a stand-still, and the greater self alone becomes manifest. Such people possess a wonderful balance of mind. Desires do not affect them. Pain and pleasure are nothing to them. Incessantly their minds soar to spiritual heights.

Such a person should not be considered to have become callous to the sufferings of those around him. He is not at all callous. A little ego is left in him to teach humanity how to be truly happy. Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna tells us that this much ego was left in him, for he had the command from God to be a teacher of this great Truth.

The fortune to attain Nirvikalpa Samadhi, which removes from one all traces of hankering for sense pleasures, is given only to a blessed few, but even those who direct their minds to the attainment of this supreme status are rewarded by the attainment of equanimity not enjoyable by others who do not make the attempt.

Naciketa's mind was thus directed, and he felt that the sense pleasures had no real value. His mind was concentrated on the eternity of the soul, and it had no room to receive the pleasures offered by the senses. Having thus put to test and convinced of Naciketa's fitness, the god of Death teaches him about the life after death.

Naciketa was qualified at an early age to receive such instruction from the god of Death. He was stirred by a desire for rectitude, and that is the reason which prompted him to question the mode of sacrifice performed by his father and not a sense of superiority. It was not anger or pity for his father, but it was pure unalloyed love and a sense of duty as

son that prompted him to save his father from the world of utter darkness (darkness 'invisible'), to which his father was heading on account of the offerings he made, — the useless cows as gifts to the Ṛtwiks.

There was no sense of anger, no bravado, no defiance, when he repeated three times the question, 'To whom will you offer me?' There was utter humility and outright sincerity in his attitude. This was real *satyāgraha* — fight for truth. This kind of pure *satyāgraha* can be found very very rare in ordinary lives. It requires such intense purity of mind and thought as exhibited by Naciketa.

Naciketa's episode can be considered a short story. It is a great short story. In the few lines which make up the narration, a romance of great magnitude is packed up. Stephen Leacock has caricatured modern novels and shown that such novels could be reduced to the size of one or two pages without at all reducing the real interest of the story, if there was one. Naciketa's story is brief, but the soul of the story is so surcharged with wisdom and thought that an entertaining novel could be spun out of it. Naciketa asks his father three times, 'To whom shalt thou give me'. In the text this is given as 'once, twice, thrice.' This is done to give the maximum effect to the situation. In between we have to read that the father did not consider that the son was serious in asking that question. So he remains silent. The effect of the silence is emphasized by the repetition of the question by the boy. Though the intention of Naciketa was not to annoy the father, the father evidently loses his temper and says in anger 'I give you unto Death.' It is unnecessary to mention that the father lost his temper, for it is a fact that is revealed more effectively at a later stage in the story.

The father has spoken out, and the son cogitates, 'Among many I am the first (in the household of my father). I am equal to, if not above, many more of the disciples of my father. Why should my father think of sending me to the god of Death. What purpose am I to serve there?' These remarks of Naciketa demonstrate his high character.

The next sloka brings us to the abode of the god of Death. In between so many details of narration are omitted. This is purposely done with a view to concentrate our attention on the main theme of the story. Naciketa is there already waiting for three days without food to see the god of Death. From this we understand that the father has given the consent to the son to offer himself to the god of Death in order to fulfil the word of truth given by him. Of course Naciketa has made him understand the necessity for keeping his word, though given in a fit of temper.

From the subsequent passages we realize that the father has not been reconciled to the son's going to meet the god of Death, and that his anger and anxiety had not entirely left him. Such effective brevity is characteristic of the stories in the Upanishads. The plot in the story is developed with a simple technique to heighten the character of the hero. Naciketa does not ask the god of Death to grant him boons. But his stay in the abode of Yama for three days without food made Yama feel it incumbent on him to offer three boons to the guest, one for every day that he had passed without attention.

The first boon Naciketa asked was to bring about peace of mind to his father. The second boon asked by him was the knowledge of the fire (sacrifice) that enables one to go to heaven. The third boon he asked was the most important one, that is the *soul* of the story. He requests Yama to instruct him about the knowledge of what happens to one after death. In seeking such a knowledge Naciketa appears as the symbol of purity itself. Yama after testing him, is satisfied that he is sincere in his desire for this Supreme knowledge of Truth, and instructs him without reserve.

The rest of the Upanishad deals with this philosophy of the soul.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

The article 'Seeing God in Everything' by Swami Gnaneswarananda, the late founder-leader of the Vedanta Society of Chicago, is a class talk on *Vivekachudamani* given by him at the Society on September 26, 1935. These talks have been kindly made available to us by Mrs Mallika Clare Gupta, a disciple of the Swami.

Dr P. Nagaraja Rao, M.A., D.Litt., Professor of Philosophy in the Venkateswara University College, Tirupati, is well-known to our readers as he has been contributing to the *Vedanta Kesari* off and on.

'Education at Higher Level' is by Prof. O. R. Krishnaswami, Principal, College of Rural Education, Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya, Coimbatore Dt.

Br. Madhavan is of the Ramakrishna Order.

Sri G. Venkatesan is attached to the College of Rural Higher Education at the Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya, Coimbatore.

Sri V. Perumal is a lecturer at K.G.F. First Grade College, Oorgaum, Mysore State.

The article, 'Lord Subrahmanya' by Sri M. V. Sridatta Sarma, M.A., who is in the services of the Maharaja of Mysore, is its second and final instalment.

Sri K. E. Parthasarathi is from Madras.

Dr N. Seshadrinathan is a physician, as also a prolific writer in Tamil, to the journals in Madras. He has also contributed articles before this to the *Vedanta Kesari*.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

DR S. RADHAKRISHNAN SOUVENIR VOLUME. Pub.: Darshana International, Moradabad (U.P.), Pp. 600. Price Rs. 30/-.

At a leave-taking ceremony from his ambassadorial job in Russia, on 5th April 1952, Radhakrishnan met Stalin. After the talk, as interpreted by Pavlov, Radhakrishnan writes: 'I met Stalin. I told him we had an emperor who after a bloody victory renounced war and became a monk. You have waded your way to power through force. Who knows that might happen to you also.' Stalin said, 'Yes, miracles do happen sometimes. I was in a theological seminary for five years'. Radhakrishnan continues: 'I patted him on the cheek and on the back. I passed my hand over his head. Stalin said, "You are the first person to treat me as a human being and not as a monster. You are leaving us and I am sad. I want you to live long. I have not long to live." Six months afterwards, he died.' So writes Dr P. Nagaraja Rao in the course of an interesting article in this Commemorative Volume in honour of Dr Radhakrishnan.

It contains as many as 76 learned papers from scholars all over the world, covering wide ranges of Philosophy, Psychology, Para-psychology, Mysticism etc. and makes for instructive reading. Blodwen Davies's paper on Dr Bucke, his life and his experience of the Cosmic Consciousness and the paper on E.S.P. and psychiatry by K. Fantl and M. A. Paul are particularly interesting for the layman. Prof Vasavada discusses a very pertinent question: how far does the Doctor propound a new philosophy and to what extent he is an interpreter of the philosophies of others?

This is a volume that every shelf on contemporary Philosophy must contain.

M. P. PANDIT

THE GREAT EQUATION: By R. Krishnaswamy Aiyar. Pub.: Chetana Ltd., Bombay. pp. 144. Price Rs. 3.50.

This is a most lucid exposition of the doctrine of Advaita Vedanta and the eminent author has really succeeded in making it easily assimilable by the common man. It was perhaps inevitable that the intricate philosophy should be explained by means of parables and metaphors but the author has always kept in view the need, not to depart from its essential tenets. One can cite for example his graphic classification of "Visheshana" in Chapt. XIV.

The author would regard the identification of the soul with the body and the mind as a 'misequation' (P. 130), and the 'samadhi-shatka', consisting of Sama, Dama, Uparati, Titiksha, Sraddha and Samadhana as 'a painful practical process of disequation.'

Altogether, this book is of exceptional merit and worth.

S. RAJAGOPALAN

SCIENCE, CULTURE AND MAN: Edited by Bepin Behari. Published by: Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi-6. Pp. 163. Price: Rs. 10.

This is a collection of talks at a science seminar held under the auspices of Theosophical Centre at Delhi. There are sixteen talks by competent men, e.g. Dr. Radhakrishnan, Prof. M. S. Thacker, Prof. J. B. Rhine, Shri Bepin Behari etc., on science, religion, spirituality. The approach is constructive and an attempt is made to study the developments in these subjects as so many complementary contributions to the sum-total of human progress.

There is one Reality—call it Consciousness, call it Life—pulsating in and as the universe. But the universe is a multiple system with graded planes of existence propelled by an inherent Truth within to develop into a spiritual evolution which entails an eventual perfection of humanity as part of its meaning. Physical science, it is pointed out in these talks, devotes itself to a study of the physical process, psychology to the unrevealing of the subtle operations of the mind, religion to the development of the subjective side of man preliminarily, leading to the entry of spirituality which concerns itself with the core of all existence, individual and universal,—all of them centering round the growth of the human personality.

It is inevitable that a collection of this kind should be uneven in places. However, Shri Bepin Behari's talk on man and his future has a special appeal.

M. P. PANDIT

ETHOS OF NON-VIOLENCE: By Dr Ishwara Topa. P. 152. Price Re. 1 50. Navajivan Publishing House. Ahmedabad-14.

This compilation based exclusively on the writings of Gandhiji, brings out the full import of the Mahatma's doctrine of non-violence which he claimed, and proved, in practice, was not meant for recluses only but for the common people also in all contexts and contingencies. He was, however, careful to add that non-violence would succeed only when we have a living faith in God (P. 87). Reliance on God for shaking off the fear of man is the way of non-violence and the best way (P. 88).

This is assuredly a valuable contribution to the study of the place of Ahimsa in human life and endeavour.

S. RAJAGOPALAN

SANSKRIT

NANDACHARITAM: By Sannidhanam Suryanarayanamurti. Published by him at 44, Jira, Secunderabad. Price Re. 1.

Composed in 150 flowing verses in *upajati* metre, this poem celebrates the life of the famous saint of the South, Nandanar. The narration is taken from the Telugu work Sampurna Bhaktivijaya of Sri J. Satyanarayanamurti, but in its Sanskrit garb it has acquired a personality of its own. The writer has incorporated quite a few idioms peculiar to the Telugu language and made the poem attractive from the literary as well as the devotional point of view.

Here is a book which could be usefully prescribed for rapid reading in the Sanskrit courses at the higher secondary level.

M. P. PANDIT

SHUDDHASHANKARAPRAKRIYABHASKARA: Nos. 1-7. By Sri Sachidanandendrasaraswati. Publishers: Adyatmaprakasha Karyalaya, Hole-Narasipur, Hassan Dt., Mysore State.

Commencing his series on the contribution of Acharya Shankara to the development of the Advaita thought, Swami Sachhidanandendra Saraswati gives in these booklets the fundamental doctrines of the Shankara approach, its special method of study and its main sub-variations. The writing is learned and stimulating though, in places, it is inevitably technical. We are sure that this series, when completed, will form a very solid contribution to Shankara Philosophy.

M. P. PANDIT.

KANNADA-SANSKRIT

BRAHMASUTRAGALU: By Swami Adidevananda. Pub. Sri Ramakrishna Ashram, Mysore. Pp. 843. Price Rs. 16/-.

With this magnificent volume, Swami Adidevananda completes his renderings and annotations of the *Prasthana-traya*. His translations of the major Upanishads and the Gita are justly famous and widely drawn upon; this issue of the Brahmasutras is sure to be even more cherished.

In his scholarly introduction, the author discusses the much debated question whether Badarayana, the author of the Sutras, and Vyasa of the Mahabharata are the same. He gives all considered views on the subject. Regarding the date of its composition, he seems inclined to agree that it predates the Epic. He also points out that the purpose of the Brahmasutras is not to found any new school of philosphy but to reconcile the apparently conflicting statements and pronouncements in the Upanishads and based upon the ancient tradition, lay down — or rather restate — the main possible lines of *upasana* to realize Brahman.

A unique feature of this edition is that besides the text, translation and notes, Swamiji has given the gist of the commentaries of the three Acharyas, Shankara, Ramanuja and Maddhva, under each Sutra. Full quotations are given in the footnotes. An index at the end of the volume further enhances its value. All told, the publication is a boon to scholars and students of Vedanta, and both the author and the publishers have our grateful homage for this service.

M. P. PANDIT

The hundred-and-thirtieth birthday Tithipuja of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, MADRAS-4.

HOLY MOTHER'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

The 112th Birthday Tithipuja of the Holy Mother, Sri Sarada Devi, was observed at the Math on the 25th December, 1964. The day started with Mangalarati and Bhajan in the Shrine at 5 a.m. followed by devotional songs and Vedic chanting.

Worship in the Shrine started at 8 a.m. and came to a close at 1-00 p.m. after Homa. About 800 devotees and an equal number of *Daridranarayanas* were served with food prasad. In the evening after Arati in the Shrine, a few incidents of the life of the Holy Mother were read out. Swami Paramatmananda and Swami Abjananda spoke on the occasion.

The public meeting which came off on Sunday, December 27, 1964, was held at the Vivekananda Hall. The meeting commenced at 3-30 p.m. with bhajan by the pupils of the Avvai Home, followed by Sri Rama Devi Mandali Children's group and Mrs Kamala Sarathi and Party. The meeting started at 4-30 p.m. with prayer by the students of the Sarada Vidyalaya High School. Sister R. S. Subbalakshmi welcomed the President of the meeting Smt. Jothi Venkatachalam, Minister for Health, Madras, the speakers and the audience.

Smt C. S. Muthulakshmi, B.A.L.T., Smt Sundaram Raman and Smt N. Devanayaki, M.A.L.T., spoke on Holy Mother and her message in Telugu, Tamil and English respectively.

After recitations by some of the prize winners and distribution of prizes the President addressed the gathering. After a vote of thanks by Smt C. Subbalakshmi, Headmistress, Sri Ramakrishna Mission Sarada Vidyalaya, T'Nagar, the meeting came to a close at 6-45 p.m.

After Arati in the Shrine there was Kali Kirtan led by Swami Priyananda for about an hour and a half.

CHRIST JAYANTI

The Christmas Eve was observed in all solemnity at the Ramakrishna Math, Madras on the evening of December 24, 1964, before a beautifully decorated portrait of Jesus Christ. The function started at 7 p.m. with worship. After the opening song by Swami Priyananda, there was reading from the Bible by Swami Abjananda. After which Sri V. A. Chandran spoke on the 'Life and Teachings of Lord Jesus Christ' in English. Sri S. K. Sivaraman proposed a vote of thanks.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, MADRAS

DHANUSHKODI & RAMESWARAM CYCLONE RELIEF

AN APPEAL

The public is already aware that the cyclone that struck the southern tip of our motherland on the 22nd of December, 1964 has left terrible destruction in its wake. The whirlwind and the tidal waves between them have left Dhanushkodi in ruins, slashed, hacked and torn up a considerable part of the coastline in and around sacred Rameswaram. Portions of Pamban bridge and railway line have been washed away. Rameswaram stood isolated. Hundreds of our fellow men, women and children have lost their lives, thousands have been rendered homeless. Wrecked houses and uprooted trees present a pathetic sight.

Those who have survived the fury of the storm and the sea are in urgent need of food and shelter, clothing and household materials. Their misery is acute and help has to be rushed to them in a big way. To relieve the want and suffering of these 'Deena Narayanas', Sri Ramakrishna Mission has already established two centres, one at Rameswaram and the other at Uchippuli — midway between Ramanathapuram and Mandapam — to distribute assistance.

We appeal to the generous public to contribute liberally to our Relief fund with the urgency it demands.

Contributions in cash and/or kind may kindly be sent to the Manager, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras-4, which will be thankfully received and acknowledged. Cheques should be drawn in favour of 'Ramakrishna Mission (Relief Fund)'; donations to the fund are exempt from income-tax.

Sri Ramakrishna Math,
Madras-4.
13-1-1965.

SWAMI KAILASANANDA,
PRESIDENT.

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॥ नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यः ॥

AUGUST 1965

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SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH

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.... Be bold and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease.
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE VEDANTA KESARI

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PANCADAŚĪ

CHAPTER II

शून्यत्वमिति चेच्छून्यं मायाकार्यमितीरितम् । न शून्यं नापि सद्यादृक्तादृक्तत्त्वमिहेष्यताम् ॥ ४९ ॥

Śūnyatvamiti-cet, if it be said that it (Māyā) is of the nature of void; *māyākāryaṁ,* the projection of Māyā; *śūnyamiti,* of the nature of void; *īritaṁ,* it would be as good as stating. *Na śūnyam,* neither void; *nāpi sat,* nor real; *tattvaṁ,* category; *yādrak,* of what type; *tādrak,* of such nature; *iha,* in the case of Māyā; *iṣyatām,* be it accepted.

49. If it be said that (Māyā) is of the nature of void, it would be as good as stating that all the projections of Māyā also are void. But let it be known that nature of Māyā is of such a category which is neither void nor real.[1]

[1] Maya's nature is different from both real and unreal, hence cannot be described. Compare sl. 109. of *Vivekachudamani.*

सन्नाप्यसन्नापि उभयात्मिका नो भिन्नाप्यभिन्नाप्युभयात्मिका नो ।
साङ्गाप्यनङ्गापि ह्युभयात्मिका नो महाद्भुताऽनिर्वचनीयरूपा ॥

नासदासीन्नो सदासीत्तदानीं किंत्वभूत्तमः । सद्योगात्तमसः सत्त्वं न स्वतस्तन्निषेधनात् ॥ ५० ॥

Tadānīṁ, then (prior to creation); (Māyā was); *asat,* non-being; *nāsīt,* was not; *sat,* being; *na āsīt,* was not; *kintu,* but; *tamaḥ,* of the nature of darkness; *abhūt,* was; *sadyogāt,* because of its conjunction with Reality; *tamasaḥ,* to the darkness; *sattvaṁ,* (came the semblance of) existence; *tat-niṣedhanāt,* that being refuted; *svataḥ,* by itself; *na (sattvaṁ asti),* (it has) no (existence).

50. Then (prior to creation) Māyā was neither of the nature of non-being nor being; but was of the nature of deep darkness. This darkness too was (said to have) existence because it was in conjunction with Being (*sat*) and not that it had an existence by itself.

NOTE: The first line in the text is a reference to the Nāsadiya Sūkta of the Rig Veda (10: 11. 130).

(*Continued on page* 182)

CONCEPT OF A WORSHIPFUL BEING

For ages now the controversy as to the nature of a worshipful Being is going on. Some say that He is infinite, absolute, without form, eternal, and is inconceivable by the human mind. Others have contended that He is of infinite good qualities, that He has form and though He is all-pervading, He has an abode of His own. Some others again say that He cannot be said to be absolute and infinite, yet He is self-surpassing ; yet others give Him a definite form and assert that He can be none other and all other gods are only lesser than Him. Simultaneously a section of humanity has held that there is no such Being at all. It is all a superstition of the frail human mind, of weak persons and should be got over. In the recent centuries this latter view has been gaining ground.

Scientists in the beginning, in the West, were the first to raise the banner of revolt against the then prevailing form of religion and theology there. For the Church at that time, put down, with a firm foot, whatever went against their theological beliefs. Science, therefore, for its very survival had to stage a great fight. Later when the scientists got a free rein to explore their field and ultimately found that science alone could not give peace to mankind, and when contacts with the different religions made it possible to know what was meant by real religion, they discarded this inimical attitude to religion. Nevertheless, the lesser men who call themselves scientists who have as yet contributed nothing either to science or to their own countries are furiously fighting the lost battle. Here, we shall not concern ourselves with these people but limit ourselves to understand the controversy cited at the beginning of this article and enlighten ourselves whether such a controversy is worth the trouble.

II

It is first of all necessary to know as to how this idea of a Being superior to man came to be conceived of in the beginning. The first feeling man experiences, when he comes to know of things, is that he is bound. In the beginning man might have felt the immensity of the power of Nature, of the elements and therefore personifying them worshipped them, so that they may be propitious to him. So there came to be the worship of the sun, the earth, the fire and water. The earth was worshipped, when man came to depend on cultivation. It was propitiated in order that it may yield crops in plenty. Man felt that these were more free than him and would grant him freedom, when propitiated. Swami Vivekananda says : 'If we try to examine the various sorts of worship all over the world, we would see that the rudest of mankind are worshipping ghosts, demons and the spirits of their forefathers. Serpent worship, worship of tribal gods and worship of the departed ones, why do they do this ? Because they feel that in some unknown way these beings are greater, more powerful than themselves, and limit their freedom. They therefore seek to propitiate these beings in order to prevent them from molesting them, in other words, to get more freedom. They also seek to win favour from these superior beings, to get by gift of the gods what ought to be earned by personal effort.'[1] So, we can say that this idea of a superior being or beings originated with the bondage man felt — the moment he began to look around — and the freedom he hankered after ; a superior being he thinks would give him unlimited freedom. Even in the crudest concept of God this idea is manifest. To quote Swami Vivekananda again : 'These two views (the ancestor worship and worship of Nature), though they seem to be contradictory, can be reconciled on a third basis, which to my mind is the real germ of religion, and that I propose to call the struggle to transcend the limitations of the senses. Either,

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[1] *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. I, pp. 222, 223. Seventh edition, 1946.

man goes to seek for the spirits of his ancestors, the spirits of the dead, that is, he wants to get a glimpse of what there is after the body is dissolved, or, he desires to understand the power working behind the stupendous phenomena of nature. Whichever of these is the case, one thing is certain, that he tries to transcend the limitations of the senses. He cannot remain satisfied with his senses; he wants to go beyond them.'[2] Later as man evolved and began to think deeply, the idea of God also evolved. God came to be conceived of as a Person, sitting somewhere in the heaven infinitely merciful, infinitely kind, who showers blessings on the good. Many gods gave place to one God, omniscient, and omnipotent. In other words Monotheism became prevalent. Now, most of the religious can not go beyond this idea, though there are indications in their scriptures which point to higher and nobler sentiments.

Well, as it is, it is not bad; we need not blame them. But when they pose to be all-knowers, and dogmatic and begin to condemn every other thought, every other sentiment, every other religion as only worth to be consigned to the dust heap, or flames, we have to pity them for their shallowness; for they are as Christ said: 'Eyes have they but they see not; ears have they but they hear not.'

Further, by these condemnations they not only expose their intolerance of a second creed or religion, other than their own, but also express lack of depth, lack of sympathy, lack of sensitivity, and fear to go beyond the limitations set by themselves. Let us remind ourselves that these are not things of the past, but of the living present. Dogmatism and fanaticism die hard. If one goes through some of the recent publications of the West and subsequently reproduced in India too, one will find how patent this fact is. Hinduism and India have again become the target of vested interests both in and outside India. This is a thing which cannot but be noted in passing though a detailed survey of it is not necessary in this context.

Now to return to our subject: This idea of a Personal God residing somewhere in the heaven was all right for the common masses but the Hindu seers were not satisfied with such a position. They persisted in their search and advanced further. They said, 'Well, God has an abode but he has an abode in us too, in everyone of us. Nay, we are his parts. Nature also is a part of Him. Just as man has a soul and a body, the whole universe and all the living and non-living beings are his body and He is its soul.' Here people still held on to a Personal God.

But there were seers who were not yet satisfied with the idea. Swami Vivekananda explains why they were not satisfied: 'This explanation — that there is a Being beyond all these manifestations of Māyā and who is attracting us towards Himself, and that we are all going towards Him — is very good, says the Vedanta, but yet the perception is not clear, the vision is dim and hazy, although it does not directly contradict reason. . . . The idea that the goal is far off, far beyond nature, attracting us all towards it, has to be brought nearer and nearer, without degrading or degenerating it.'[3] The sages, therefore, indomitably struggled on until they came to the last word of Vedanta — Non-dualism, the idea of One without a second. 'The God of heaven becomes the God in nature, and the God in nature becomes the God who is nature, and the God who is nature becomes the God within this temple of the body, and the God dwelling in the temple of the body at last becomes the temple itself, becomes the soul and man — and there it reaches the last words Vedanta can teach.'[4] This idea, however, is beyond the grasp of most people. If any one says 'You and I are Gods,' or Ātman is Brahman, the ordinary man will be shocked at — what he considers — this blasphemy. It is a thought too deep for most of mankind. They

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 128.

will either make a hash of this idea or will simply try to ridicule it. So, we see that every man wants whatever he considers as true to be accepted by everyone else. But we must ask ourselves, when we propound a theory, specially about religion and God : What right have we to condemn others or force them to accept our opinions ? Fanatics have no patience to reflect upon this. They will either ask you to follow their pet theories or suffer the consequences. In olden days it was the sword but now it is abuse and vilification. We do not know, how God, who is supposed to be all-love, can remain where so much hatred is rampant.

III

Now, we have so many concepts of God. Which concept is true ? What is the way out of this labyrinth of concepts ? What must a common man follow ? Were the great sages all-wrong ? If they were not, whom should one follow ? is the common man's dilemma. But to the Hindu, if he had studied his own scriptures, heard his Masters with attention and faith, this should be no problem at all. Even as early as in the times of Ṛg Veda our sages found out that 'Truth is One but sages call It variously, as Indra, Varuna, and the like.'[5] By whatever name one called that Supreme Being it was one and the same. Later too we find this idea being again and again repeated and stressed. In the *Bhagavad Gītā* Sri Krishna says, 'One who worships Me (the Lord), in whatever form, to him I come in that form. For, O Arjuna, all people travel everywhere in my path alone.'[6] A poet sang, 'Men take different paths, straight or crooked through different tendencies, yet, O Lord, Thou alone art the ultimate goal of all men, as ocean is of all rivers.'[7] Sri Ramakrishna by his intuitive realizations verified this truth and then in his homely inimitable style said : 'Just as water drawn from the different places of a tank by people speaking several languages is variously named, as 'jal', 'pāni', 'aqua' and water, so according to the distinctive tendencies of man, he addresses God, as Brahman, Allah, Krishna, Kali and the like.'

So, it is wrong to be dogmatic about any one concept of God. Those who insist that God can be only what they consider Him to be are consciously or unconsciously dictating terms to God. In what a predicament should that God not be ! Do they not consider this overlording Him ? If God were such a weak person as to listen to the dictates of a community however large and powerful, He would be no better than the tribal gods conceived of in earlier stages of man's history. Yet, why do people persist in their self-righteous notions ? In one word, if we have to say, they are not at all perturbed about God. They are concerned with all other things except Him. So there is conflict and quarrel, dispute and bloodshed, on the outer forms, and modes of worship.

Before dealing with the question, what is the path which one has to choose from among so many concepts, we have to consider one's own nature. Man is man because he can think, why then should he be reduced to the position of dumb driven cattle ? The constitution of each man is different. No two persons are exactly alike even in physical appearance. Man comes into this world with loads of tendencies and never with a *tabula rasa*. The very fact that beings are born, say the Indian scriptures, is due to the momentum of past actions or Karma, and accordingly are their temperaments formed. The Hindu scriptures speak of three *gunas* or constituents of Nature viz. *sattva, rajas,* and *tamas*, and according

[5] इन्द्रं मित्रं वरुणमग्निमाहुरथो दिव्यः स सुपर्णो गरुत्मान् ।
एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्त्यग्निं यमं मातरिश्वानमाहुः ॥
—*Rig Veda*, 1. 22. 165. 46.

[6] ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम् ।
[illegible] वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥

[7] रुचीनां वैचित्र्यादृजुकुटिलनानापथजुषां
नृणामेको गम्यस्त्वमसि पयसामर्णव इव ॥

as any of these constituents is predominant the nature of man is tranquil, active or inert. For 'as is one's nature so is one's faith. And man's character develops according to his faith, therefore as is his faith so is man'.[8] If man has to make real progress he should be allowed to develop in his own way according to his own nature. What another man can do, if possible, is to give him a helping hand in his own way and never by interfering with his ideal or condemning what he has cherished. If one cannot do that and if one is still solicitous for the welfare of that person, what best he can do is to keep off that person's track. What Sri Ramakrishna taught by reprimand and instructions to 'M', the writer of the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, can be studied with much benefit towards our spiritual growth. 'M', who had imbibed the idea that image worship is not a proper mode of worship, at the beginning of his contact with the Master came forward to argue that though God may have form, yet 'Certainly He is not the clay image!'

MASTER (*interrupting*): 'But why clay? It is an image of Spirit'.

'M' could not quite understand the significance of this 'image of Spirit'. 'But, sir,' he said to the Master, 'one should explain to those who worship the clay image that it is *not* God, and that, while worshipping it, they should have God in view and not the clay image. One should not worship clay.'

MASTER (*sharply*): 'That's the one hobby of you Calcutta people — giving lectures and bringing others to the light! Nobody ever stops to consider how to get the light himself. Who are you to teach others?'

By Calcutta people the Master means people who are imbued with the modern ideas. Man will do more harm than good by such interference. Sri Krishna says in the Gita, 'Do not create confusion in the minds of the ignorant who are attached to work. For a wise man should encourage them in all work by steadily engaging himself in work.'[9] By working in an unselfish manner, without any motive man's mind gets purified and in a purified mind values of things become more and more clear until he comes to know the true nature of things. Similarly whatever a person's idea of God may be, he will, if he is sincere, come to the Truth. That is why Sri Ramakrishna said: 'He who is the Lord of the Universe will teach everyone. He alone teaches us, who has created this universe, who has made the sun and moon, men and beasts and all other beings. The Lord has done so many *things* — will He not show people the way to worship Him? If they need teaching, then He will be the Teacher. *He is our Inner* Guide.'

IV

What is, therefore, required of man is sincerity and yearning to know God, to see Him. Have we that yearning? Then we are on the right path. Do we do our spiritual practices regularly and systematically? Then there is hope that we shall one day see Him, that we are surely making progress on the path though we may not be aware of it. But mere book knowledge and parrot-like repetition of scriptures will avail us nothing, take us nowhere. It cannot show us God. The Hindu scriptures openly and boldly avow this: 'Neither by expounding (of scriptures), nor by ratiocination nor by reading a great many Texts can this Ātman be attained. It is attained by him who seeks Him alone. Such a one's soul is illumined by the light of the Lord.'[10] A great significance is attached

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[8] सत्त्वानुरूपा सर्वस्य श्रद्धा भवति भारत ।
श्रद्धा मयोऽयं पुरुषः यो यच्छ्रद्धः स एव सः ॥

[9] न बुद्धिभेदं जनयेदज्ञानां कर्मसङ्गिनाम् ।
जोषयेत्सर्वकर्माणि विद्वान्युक्तस्समाचरन् ॥
—*Ibid.*, 3. 26.

[10] नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यो न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन
यमेवैष वृणुते तेन लभ्यस्तस्यैष आत्मा
विवृणुते तनुं स्वाम् ॥

to the words 'Him alone'. It will not do to seek God as one among the many things you desire. It is no seeking at all. One should seek Him and Him alone. And this means that there should be no other thought in the mind and no other word in the speech except about Him, and no other deed but that which is dedicated to Him. And this should be done not for a day or a year but till realization comes. Can such steadfastness and one-pointedness be attained all of a sudden? By long, continuous and regular practice one gets a little concentration. How much of practice is then not necessary to have this desire to seek 'God alone'! He only truly worships who worships in this manner. Such a person attains Light no matter what form or ideal he worships. Attaining Light himself he becomes a light unto others. So it is not only the concept of God that brings man Light but his devotion to that concept. Swami Vivekananda said that that age will be an ideal one when each person will pursue his ideal of religion alone without any interference whatsoever from anywhere.

Let us understand this thoroughly and shed all inimical attitudes towards other sects, other religions and pursue our own paths with steadfastness and devotion, remembering at the same time that hatred and fanaticism will not lead us anywhere near God. On the other hand, it will take us away from Him. Study the lives of the saints and sages and find out one from among them who had attained that state by hating others. God is all-love. So if we have to worship God we should also become all-loving. Then and then alone our worship will be fruitful.

PANCADASĪ — (*Continued from page 177*)

अत एव द्वितीयत्वं शून्यवन्न हि गण्यते । न लोके चैत्रतच्छक्त्योर्जीवितं लिख्यते पृथक् ॥ ५१ ॥

Ata eva, therefore ; *śunyavat*, as in the case of a non-entity ; *dvitīyatvaṁ*, a secondness ; *nahi gaṇyate*, is not acceptable ; *loké*, in the world ; *caitra-tacchaktyoḥ*, of Chaitra (a person) and his power ; *jīvitaṁ*, life ; *pṛthak*, separately ; *na likhyate*, (are) not written.

51. As there is no existence for Māyā separate from Brahman, so, like void which cannot be counted as a second entity, Māyā too cannot be accepted as a second entity with reference to Brahman. In the world the life history of Chaitra and that of his power cannot be separately written.*

* If Chaitra and his power were two entities two separate life histories could have been written about each, but not being so that is an impossibility ; similarly about Māyā, nothing positive can be said without reference to Brahman and hence it is not a second entity — that is the meaning.

The Blessed One said : 'Who is an outcast?

'An outcast is the man who is angry and bears hatred ; the man who is wicked and hypocritical, he who embraces error and is full of deceit.

'Whosoever is a provoker and is avaricious, has evil desires, is envious, wicked, shameless, and without fear to commit wrong, let him be known as an outcast.

'Not by birth does one become an outcast, not by birth does one become a Brahman ; by deeds one becomes an outcast, by deeds one becomes a Brahman.'

— From *The Gospel of Buddha* by PAUL CARUS.

HOW TO BECOME SPIRITUALLY AWAKENED

SWAMI YATISWARANANDA

SITTING at the feet of the great disciples of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna, the religion that we learnt taught us not to be ego-centric, but to be dedicated to the service of the Lord in man. Some words of Swami Vivekananda come to my mind always. From America he wrote, and these were also the last lines in his reply to the Madras address, 'First let us ourselves be gods and then help others to be gods'. Swamiji put this idea before us in another form : each one of us should lead our life in such a way, that we attain to our spiritual realization, freed from all bonds. Not only that, we must also be able to promote the welfare of others. The ideal is, that in the innermost core of our being, we have to realize the God-head ; again, we have to experience Him as manifest in all. Out of this realization of his have come into existence all the various forms of service of the Ramakrishna Movement : Medical Service, Educational Service, Preaching and Publication. The ideal is to serve the Divine in others. Just as we ourselves try to be free we should also try to help others to be free.

Before I begin the talk I would like to read to you some passages from the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna.

A DEVOTEE : "Sir, is it necessary to have a Guru ?

MASTER : "Yes, many need a Guru. But a man must have faith in the Guru's words.....

"One should constantly repeat the name of God. The name of God is highly effective in the Kaliyuga. The practice of Yoga is not possible in this age, for the life of man depends on food. Clap your hands while repeating God's name, and the bird of your sin will fly away.

"One should always seek the company of holy men. The nearer you approach the Ganges, the cooler the breeze will feel. Again, the nearer you go to a fire, the hotter the air will feel.

"But one cannot achieve anything through laziness and procrastination. People who desire worldly enjoyment say about spiritual progress : 'Well, it will all happen in time. We shall realize God sometime or other.'

"It is said that, in the Kaliyuga, if a man can weep for God one day and one night, he sees Him.

"Feel piqued at God and say to Him : 'You have created me. Now you must reveal yourself to me.' Whether you live in the world or elsewhere, always fix your mind on God.

"Go forward. The wood-cutter, following the instructions of the holy man, went forward and found in the forest sandal-wood and mines of silver and gold ; and going still farther, he found diamonds and other precious stones.

"The ignorant are like people living in a house with clay walls. There is very little light inside, and they cannot see outside at all. But those who enter the world after attaining the knowledge of God are like people living in a house made of glass. For them inside and outside are light. They can see things outside as well as inside.

"Nothing exists except the One. That One is the Supreme Brahman." *

WHY DO WE NOT MAKE PROGRESS

As in our worldly affairs so also in the world of the Spirit there must be systematic practice. We all must be able to prepare ourselves, so that we may be in the proper mood to follow the spiritual path. Many of you might know this story : Sri Ramakrishna had a great disciple, Saint Durgacharan Nag— Naga Mahashaya as he used to be called. His father was very much attached to him, and again the old man used to do a lot of 'Japa'. Once when he was told, 'Your father is a great devotee', Naga Mahashaya replied, 'What can he achieve ? He is so much attached to me. An anchored boat does not move'. There is a story behind this saying. Some drunkards, one moon-lit night, took it into their head to go on a boat-ride. They

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* *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, p. 179, 180.

went to the Ghat, hired a boat, sat at the oars and started rowing. They rowed and rowed and rowed, the whole night. Early in the morning, when the effect of the drink was gone, to their surprise they found they had not moved an inch. 'What is the matter? What is the matter!' they asked. They had forgotten to raise the anchor.

I hear constant complaints from people, 'We are doing our spiritual practice, but we do not make any progress'. The reply is here. At the time of your spiritual practice, are you able, at least to some extent, to free your mind from worldly matters and give your purified mind to God? That is the point. We need training in all paths. Some of you might have read Swami Vivekananda's Jñāna Yoga, Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Rāja Yoga. Whatever path one may follow, one needs discipline, proper training of the mind and creation of the proper mood. If the mind is trained and the mood is created, one can carry on one's spiritual practice with great success. Our trouble is: In worldly matters we may follow some method, but in spiritual affairs we are like children. I have seen grown-up people and big officials talking like children. So an inner personality is to be built up. Many of us are persons but have no personality. We are individuals, but have no individuality. Through moral practice, through fulfilment of duties, through regular worship, a spiritualized personality is to be built up. It is then that our spiritual practice becomes fruitful. Our prayers and meditation will prove to be a source of great blessing. I repeat, in all the paths, in all the Yogas, disciplines are necessary. If I follow Karma Yoga, my mind must be comparatively calm. I must try to be detached from the things of the world and from the fruits of my Karma. I must try to dedicate the work to God. If I follow Bhakti Yoga, I must have a great yearning for God. It is a spiritual hunger that cannot be appeased by anything in the world. Through prayer, through Japa, through meditation and ultimately through Divine contact, the spiritual seeker appeases this spiritual hunger and finds Peace and Bliss in Divine realization. Many want to follow Jñāna Yoga, but the mind is to be trained so that it can follow the path of extreme self-analysis — 'I am not the body; I am not the mind; I am not the ego nor the senses; I am the spirit.' Our teachers of Jñāna Yoga say: one must have perfect dispassion for enjoyment, dislike for any future life and power to discriminate between the real and the unreal. One must have mental discipline. One must have infinite faith (Śraddhā) in the Supreme Spirit. One must be able to practise concentration.

When Concentration Becomes Beneficial

Let us remember one point. Many people say, 'Oh! I am not able to practise concentration'. Knowing the persons, that their mind is not pure enough, I say to them 'It is good that you don't have concentration'. If an impure mind gets concentrated, it becomes like a bombshell. Aren't we concentrated when we are angry, when we are full of hatred and jealousy? That concentration is no good. It is actually dangerous. So an amount of spiritual discipline is necessary. In the path of Yoga, Patanjali speaks of Yama and Niyama. You have to practise these disciplines as much as you can. One cannot be established in the spiritual life all of a sudden.

Ahimsa, satya, asteya, brahmacharya, aparigraha (non-dependance on others' charity) are the first disciplines; Niyama — which consists chiefly of Śaucha, purity of body and mind, Santosha, contentment — has to be developed. If one is always grumbling and complaining, can one with such a mind, ever do anything successfully either in this world or in the world of spirit? No. We must adjust to the things in this world and try to improve ourselves.

TAPAS: There should be an amount of austerity in life. Without rigour in spiritual practices, each generation is becoming softer than the previous one. Nothing can be achieved by these soft people.

SWADHYAYA : We study books. Does anything enter our mind ! We hear a lecture and say it was wonderful ; and when asked 'what did you hear ?' we would not be able to repeat anything. The words enter through one ear and pass out through the other. They are not retained. Swādhyāya means to reflect on what you study. Make it a part of your own. 'Śrotavyaḥ' : First you hear or read, then you have to reflect on what you have heard or read, i.e. 'Mantavyaḥ'. That is the way. When we are established in the moral path, to some extent, then we will surely get the benefit of spiritual disciplines.

ASANA : You may sit like a statue for many hours ; what do you get ? Pretty nothing. At least there should be spiritual aspiration ; then your sitting posture helps you in your spiritual practice.

PRANAYAMA : In the practice of Prāṇāyāma you stop your breath. What do you gain ? If it is merely a physical phenomenon, a football bladder then must be a great Yogi. What do you get by it ? Nothing by itself. But when the mind is greatly disciplined, when the mind is in a spiritual mood, Prāṇāyāma helps one to rise to a higher plane of consciousness.

PRATYAHARA is detachment. From everything the mind is to be detached. When you are attending to some work you banish all other thoughts and give your mind to that particular object. If you fail to practise detachment you invite worries. When you go to sleep, and think of too many things, you don't get sleep, you suffer from insomnia and fall ill. The mind is to be detached from all things at will.

Similarly if you wish to meditate, what should you do ? Detach your mind, as much as you can, from the things of the world ; even from the pictures, the thoughts and the feelings that arise within you. But detachment should not create a vacuum in your mind. A vacant mind will fall asleep. Be wide awake. Take the name of the Lord and meditate on Him. Then there would not be any fear of falling asleep. Instead the mind will rise to a higher plane.

DHARANA : Fix your mind on some divine theme and that is Dhāraṇa.

DHYANA : Fix the mind on a holy word or on a holy blissful form — that is a step to attain to what is called Dhyāna or contemplation. You remain absorbed in Divine Consciousness and that leads to the higher state, the superconscious state.

But before we proceed we will ask ourselves a question and that is very vital. We identify ourselves with the body and think that we are men and women. We worship a certain Deity — Male or Female. We begin our spiritual life that way, and end also in that way ; what do we gain ? At the very beginning of our spiritual life, it is essential on our part to be conscious that we are all souls. The Ātman, the spiritual entity, has become bound by ego, bound by the mind, bound by the senses, bound by the body. This Ātman is to be freed.

WORSHIP OF GOD

What then is worship of God ? What is the conception of God ? In Europe a devotee said to me 'Swami, never utter the word "God". It calls up our childhood image, viz., there is one beyond the clouds, in the Heaven, ever eager to punish those who break His laws. I cannot think of that'. I said, 'All right, use the word Īśwara. I use the word Brahman'.

If we wish to worship God we must feel our nearness to Him. In a way He is the Creator, the Protector and the Destroyer. He takes things back to Himself, which we call destroying ; but He is much more than that, He is the Soul of our souls, nearer than the nearest, dearer than the dearest. He comes to us as Father and Mother. He comes to us as the Guru and He comes to us also as Iṣṭa Devatā — the deity chosen for worship. According to the dualistic Vedanta, and most of us should start as dualists, the soul and the over-soul — the Ātman and Paramatman

— are ever connected. They are ever in union ; yet owing to the impurity of our mind, we become attached to the Lord's creation but not to Him. A great western Psychologist, seeing the ways of ordinary religious people, once remarked, 'People do not want God. They want to use God!' They want to pray to God so that He may grant all their prayers and if He does not grant these prayers, some become sceptical and say "Oh, God does not exist, and even if He exists, He is deaf, He is blind, He does not respond". That kind of childish conception is no good. Again you want only the good God, as if He has no other task but to grant you boons.

You know, Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna worshipped the Supreme Spirit, first in the form of Kali, a representation of The Cosmic Process. Mother with one hand is creating ; with another hand She is protecting ; with the third hand She is destroying ; and with the fourth hand She is holding the decapitated head. This is the formal representation of what one of the Upaniṣadic seers said. The disciple asked the father '*adhi hi bhagavo brahmeti*', 'Master, tell me about Brahman.' And the father replied : 'Brahman is that out of which all things come into being, by which all things live and unto which all things go back.' In our Bhakti Śāstras we call it *Īśwara*, '*God*' and in Vedanta we call it Sat-*Chit-Ānanda*. He is Infinite Existence, He is Infinite Consciousness, He is Infinite Bliss. He dwells in our soul and is the Soul of our souls. Again, we all dwell in Him. We must feel it, at least His nearness. But even if we cannot feel it, we should try to develop the consciousness that He is nearer than the nearest, dearer than the dearest. What is it that obstructs this consciousness? Our desires stand in the way of this spiritual awareness. So let us try to purify this mind.

Here you come across a big problem. It is the impure mind that runs after the things of the world. The pure mind naturally reflects the glory of God, moves towards Him, meditates on Him, tries to feel His Divine Presence, Love and Bliss. How to purify the mind? First of all you must avoid evil thoughts, evil feelings, evil actions, as much as you can. Entertain good thoughts, good feelings and perform good actions. That is the first step. We should always bear in mind that we are all souls, Ātman. This Ātman has put on a human personality, with a view to play a part in the Cosmic drama of life. Whatever be the part that is assigned to us, that part has to be played well ; That means, we have to perform the duties of life and work in a spirit of detachment, as a form of service to God. But mere moral practice and the fulfilment of duties are not enough to purify the mind ; we have to meditate on Him, pray to Him who is the Infinite Source of purity, of Knowledge, devotion, compassion, Love and Bliss.

Here we come to the question : How to worship God, how to pray to Him? But the conception of God is too vast. I give an illustration : We are like small bubbles. The ocean is too big for our conception. So what should we do? We find some mighty waves ; let us move towards them, attach ourselves to them and in course of time we have an idea of the ocean itself. Similarly, we start our spiritual journey with one such mountain-like wave, our Iṣṭa Devatā, we just worship Him, pray to Him, then we come to have a broader conception of life and broader conception of Reality. The Iṣṭa Devatā tells us 'Look here. I may be a mighty wave, you may be a small bubble. But all of us have got the infinite ocean behind us'. When the proper time comes, He reveals to us the highest Truth.

Is A Guru Essential

Now, we read in the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, a devotee asking, 'Sir, is a spiritual teacher necessary?' Sri Ramakrishna replied that it is necessary for many. If there be some unique souls, born with divine consciousness, who feel the Divine presence even from their very childhood, they do not need a spiritual teacher, but all others do need. Once a devotee asked our teacher Swami

Brahmananda — and I have been telling many of you to read, if you have not done so, *The Spiritual Teachings of Swami Brahmananda* — 'Maharaj, is a Guru necessary?' and the Swami smiled and said, 'My boy, even if you want to be a thief, you need a teacher. How much more should there be the necessity of a teacher when you want to know the highest truth!' You know there are gangs of pickpockets; they have to pass through a tremendous discipline and training and then only one can be an expert pickpocket.

In this connection, I wish to tell you a story: Girishchandra Ghosh, the actor and dramatist and a great devotee of Sri Ramakrishna used to practise Homoeopathy in his old age. Taking the name of the Master he would give medicine. He had naturally tremendous intuition to achieve success in his way of treatment. One day an elderly and very decent-looking gentleman was sitting by his side, when a young man came and said, 'Sir, I have lost my wrist watch on my way'. The other gentleman became inquisitive and asked, 'When and where did you lose it?' He said, 'Sir, I lost it at such and such an hour, at such and such a place', and the man said 'You will get it back'. How could he give the assurance? Because, the fine-looking gentleman was one of the leaders of the pickpockets, one of their Gurus.

I give you another instance. You want to learn Astronomy; you take a book and try to understand it; you get precious nothing! But the Astronomer says something astounding. Every day you see the sun rising and setting and here comes a man who says the sun never rises; the sun never sets; it is all due to the movement of the earth. If we believe our sense perception fully, we do not pay any heed to him. But if we do not, we have to go to him, study under him, make experiments, and then we really convince ourselves what we have seen is an illusion and it is just the truth that the sun never moves,

A spiritual teacher also comes and says something astounding. We are all conscious of our body. We think we are all men and women but the spiritual teacher says that we are the Spirit, distinct from the body and distinct from the mind and distinct from the ego. But if you think as many think, 'he is a cheat', Lord bless you! But if you doubt sometimes, 'Am I this mass of flesh, this mass of filth or is there something living in me, something living in everybody?' If you start thinking like that, your spiritual life begins. I go to a teacher who has been following the spiritual path all his life, has attained illumination, has come to possess a tremendous sympathy, love, compassion and kindness. I sit at his feet, learn from him something of spiritual disciplines and do my spiritual practices regularly. As my mind becomes purer and purer, I get something in the domain of the spirit and my Iṣṭa Devatā becomes living. I feel within me a presence that permeates my being, a presence that permeates everybody.

I will tell you a story. In the Upaniṣads we come across '*Nārada Sanatkumāra Samvāda*', a discourse between Narada and Sanatkumara. Saints are not born perfect, they have to manifest their perfection. Through *sādhana* they unfold their potentiality. Saints and sages do not drop from the sky. Narada had his period of true studentship, studied all branches of learning, studied the scriptures, sciences and arts. But having mastered the subjects, he found something was lacking in him. He had studied many things but had not known himself. We all are quite content to read and know of the outer world but we forget to know even a bit of ourselves. It is most unscientific. A great Western physicist has said, 'That to which Truth matters must have a place in reality, whatever be the definition of reality'. Without some knowledge about the subject, education is incomplete. Our world is full of half-educated people, of those who don't know themselves, who don't know anything of the higher Reality, but pose to be teachers or saviours of the world. Such

let us come back to the anecdote : 'Narada felt "I am not an Ātmavit".' He felt a deep pain. He says, '*Soham bhagavo śochāmi* — (I, who have not known the Reality in me, am in great sorrow). Please remove my sorrow. Take this sorrow away from me. Give me peace.' The Guru listened to him with infinite tenderness, took him step by step, helped him to have a finer and finer mind and ultimately revealed to him the Truth. '*Yo vai bhūmā tat sukham nālpe sukhamasti* — That alone which is infinite is bliss. There is no Bliss in the finite.'

How to Purify Our Minds

Our trouble is that our soul longs for infinite joy, infinite love, infinite bliss. But we want, we try to find that in the finite and if we don't succeed we feel frustrated. The Guru said, 'If you want real joy, unbounded joy, you have to reach the Infinite'. So the question was : What is meant by the Infinite ? It is that which is everywhere — above, below, to the right and to the left. But how to reach it ? Here the great ancient teacher Sanat-Kumara gives us in a nut-shell the whole course of spiritual discipline, *āhāra śuddhau sattva śuddhiḥ, sattva-śuddhau dhruvā smṛtiḥ, smṛti lambhe sarva granthīnām vipramokṣaḥ.* Food should be pure. When food is pure, our nature becomes pure, and when nature becomes pure, mind becomes pure, and when the mind becomes pure, we remember our spiritual nature. Gradually we are established in spiritual consciousness and that is emancipation. That is freedom when the Self-Consciousness (Divine) has dawned, when we have realized the Infinite Spirit. Once that is done, one feels oneself one with the Infinite Spirit, and all bonds drop off. Let us now try to understand the meaning of *āhāra* : *āhāra* is what we take. Does it mean pure food ? Pure Sattvic food ? Pure vegetarian food ? How far does it help ? It helps a little ; but unless you know how to purify the mind, nothing happens. There are plenty of wicked people are they ? Lord bless them ! You feed a poisonous snake with the purest of milk. It will manufacture poison, won't it ? So something of our poisonous nature is to be discarded. Therefore, Shankara observes : 'All right ! you take pure food, but that is for the nourishment of the body. But the food that you take through the eye, through the ear, through the senses and the mind, all that food also should be pure. Then, your nature becomes pure, the subtle body becomes pure, and then comes illumination.'

Some of you might have seen the three Japanese monkeys ; you know, one monkey is closing both the ears, another both the eyes and another the mouth. During my stay in Europe, in Switzerland, I came across a stone-carving on the beach of the lake on which Geneva is situated. It was in a small town. There also there were the three monkeys, but with this difference, one had only one eye closed, another had only one ear closed and the third had half of the mouth closed. I was taken aback for a moment. I thought :' What is this ?' Then came in a flash. I understood the meaning, 'Don't see what is bad ; see what is good. Don't hear what is bad ; hear what is good. Don't say what is bad ; say what is good.' First I thought it was an original idea. Then my mind turned to the Upaniṣads. There is a text, a peace chant : *Om bhadraṁ karṇebhiḥ, śṛṇuyāma devāḥ, bhadraṁ paśyemākṣabhir yajatrāḥ, sthiraiṛaṅgaistuṣṭuvaṁsastanubhiḥ vyaśema devahitaṁ yadāyuḥ.* 'Let us see what is 'Bhadra' — good. Let us hear what is 'Bhadra'. Let us sing the glory of the Divine Spirit.' That is to be done. And, when you have done that, to some extent, the mind becomes pure. Make the best use of your vocal organ. You may make bad use of it saying some awful things. Don't do it. Take the name of the Lord — any Name that appeals to you. Meditate on any aspect that appeals to you with an amount of devotion. After some time you will find, your mind is becoming pure. The Divine Name, the Divine Form, uplift

of your Iṣṭa Devatā, a glimpse even of the universal Spirit.

What is Japa and Where is One to Meditate

The Infinite Spirit is there but we cannot reach it. We must follow a path that helps us to reach That, higher and higher, step by step. I want to reach the snow-capped mountains ; can I jump and reach it all at once? No. Swami Brahmananda says in his *Spiritual Teachings* : 'You want to reach the roof. Do you jump to the roof? No. If you do, you fall down and break your legs. Go step by step.' So Japa, as the Master has been saying, is one of the most efficient means. But Japa is not to be done like a parrot, *tajjapastadartha bhāvanaṁ.* As you repeat the Divine Name, do the *Artha-Bhāvana.* What is *Artha-Bhāvana?* Dwelling on the meaning. First of all, let us think of the Luminous, Blissful Form of the Lord i.e. the Iṣṭa Devatā. Then think of Him as an embodiment of Infinite Purity, Knowledge, Devotion, Compassion, Love and Bliss. Then think He is no other than the Paramātman — the all-pervading Spirit dwelling in all beings.

We are asked to meditate in the 'Lotus of the Heart'. Where is this Heart? Is it the physiological heart? We cannot do anything there. It is the consciousness that is in the Heart, the consciousness that permeates my entire body and mind. It is the consciousness of the Ātman, the consciousness of the Paramātman. We have to meditate in this Chidākāśa. We have to think of ourselves as the devotee, and think of the Iṣṭa Devatā as the manifestation of Paramātman.

Swami Brahmananda used to tell us, "As you do your spiritual practices, you understand what is meant by the word 'Heart'. First you may think of it as the 'Mahākāśa', external space ; later, you may think of it as the cosmo-mental world." The real heart is in the Chidākāśa, in the realm of pure consciousness. In that the soul, the unit of consciousness [illegible] Spirit. So you have to meditate on the Iṣṭa Devatā in the inner world.

It is good to have a picture. Gaze at the picture ; watch the picture. But it is much better to install your picture, the Holy form, in your inner world. Then you are not to depend on anything outside. Whenever you want, look within where your Iṣṭa Devatā is seated, and pray to Him. Repeat His Divine Name ; meditate on Him ; first, it may be on His Form, then on His attributes, next on His infinite nature. That is how one is to progress.

Let us go back again to the Yoga aphorism of Patañjali, already referred to, wherein he tells us how to do japa viz., *tajjapastadartha-bhāvanaṁ.* Now if I repeat the Lord's name and meditate on Him, what will happen to me? The Teacher says, "*tadartha-bhāvana* — Think of the meaning — the contents, the connotation of the word." What happens if we do that? Obstacles are removed and new spiritual consciousness awakens. Now with the help of Japa and simple Dhyāna, obstacles are removed. Psychologists have explained this in a remarkable way. We are always manufacturing worries and anxieties, always manufacturing evil thoughts. These evil thoughts sicken our mind and sicken our body. The more we think of holy thoughts, the more we repeat the holy harmonious sound and the more we meditate on the blissful Form of the Lord, the more the mind is set in abundant harmony. Illnesses, self-created, self-manufactured, drop off. Then harmony is established in the mind. This harmony reflects itself on the body. So, to some extent physical health and mental health improve with the repetition of the Divine Name and we come to know the power of the Divine Name. With the power of meditating on the holy Form, a new spiritual consciousness that was lying hidden, that was potential, manifests itself. Then we discover that we are not just these personalities but we are all souls ; and the Iṣṭa [illegible]

source of all Love. Such is the power of the Divine Name.

What is Dhyāna? We talk of meditation. You say 'I am meditating'. What are you meditating on? Going on brooding over something or other? That is not what is implied by the word Dhyāna. Dhyāna is: when as you think of the Lord, you become absorbed in the Divine thought. But this absorption would not come all of a sudden. The Japa we do is a step towards that. Repeat the Divine Name, think of Him, and the mind becomes a little calm. Even the sound drops off. You go on thinking of Him. Then, when God or the Iṣṭa Devatā becomes more real than the things of the world, naturally the mind gets absorbed and you gradually get a *taste of the* Divine Presence, Love and Bliss. He may come to us in the form of the Iṣṭa Devatā; as the Supreme Spirit, as Sat-Chit-Ananda, i.e. Infinite Consciousness, Infinite Love, Infinite Bliss. This is what happens if you undergo regular spiritual practice.

In the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna,* the Master has said, 'You must have spiritual yearning'. Spiritual yearning is like hunger. When people ask me 'Why should I meditate?' I say in return, 'Why should you? *Don't do it.*' But if you had the yearning *born in you,* you would have come to know what spiritual hunger is. Then you could not but think of God, you could not but pray to Him, you could not but take his Divine Name and think of His glory. This hunger is to be awakened. This hunger is to be maintained. That becomes possible if you do your spiritual practice regularly. You feed the body with material food; you feed the mind through study, with thoughts. But you actually starve the soul in the midst of plenty. Do you not feel starved? The soul yearns for the Infinite Spirit; it yearns to realize the Divine Presence, Love and Bliss infinite, and we do not satisfy the yearning. But when that is done, a new life starts.

The Master has also said that

lowing the spiritual path, who help in strengthening us in the spiritual path, who reflect something of the Divine Glory, which we also wish to realize. That is necessary.

FOLLOW THE RIGHT PATH: BEGIN FROM THE BEGINNING

Again the Master said, 'One must follow the right path'. Suppose I am thrown in the wilderness. If I follow one path, what happens? I enter the wilderness more and more. If I follow another path, I come out of it. I am reminded of an American story. A motorist was driving at break-neck speed. He wanted to reach a certain place. He asked a school boy who had studied a little geography: 'My son, if I go this way, shall I be able to reach the place?' 'Yes Sir,' said the boy, 'You will reach it.' 'How far is it this way?' asked the motorist. 'Sir, you will have to go 25,000 miles' replied the boy. 'If I go the other way?' 'Then only two miles' was the answer. Do you follow the idea? By one path, you have to come round the world to reach the place. If you go the other way just two miles. Through proper mood, through proper attitude, if you follow the proper directions you reach the goal soon, progress is quickened. A tremendous change takes place within you. But don't try to quicken your steps too much. Go slow, but with determination, along the right path. Gradually you shall reach the highest truth. But, as I said in that illustration of climbing the snow-capped mountain, proceed step by step.

So in our spiritual practice, first comes 'Pratima Puja', i.e. worshipping the Lord in some aspect with the help of a form, a symbol, a picture, or an image. Next, the repetition of the Lord's Name, thinking of Him and singing of His glory. Later on as I said, the mind gets a little absorbed; you feel the Divine presence. That is Dhyāna, and Dhyāna leads to the highest goal, the highest realization. In order to move, we should proceed step by step. So the Master says, 'Go forward, step

silver mine, come to the gold mine and then come to the diamond mine'. Similarly, if we sincerely follow the spiritual path and begin from the beginning, we will reach the Truth. But, if we begin from the end, we reach nowhere. Some want to practise Advaita *sādhana*. I tell them, 'I know nothing of Advaita *sādhana;* go to some other teacher.' But if you want to begin from the beginning, I can tell you something of it.

So, first of all, begin with the form-aspect. I have *dehātma-buddhi,* body consciousness, I am an embodied being. I am a person amongst persons. How can I think of the Infinite Spirit? I can't. So let me begin as Maruti said. Hanuman was asked by Śri Rama 'How do you think of Me?' Hanuman said: 'Lord, when I consider myself as a personality bound by *dehātma-buddhi* i.e. as an embodied being, I think of myself as Your servant and You as my Master; and Lord, when I think, I am a soul distinct from the body and mind, I consider myself as a part and You as the whole. But at other moments, my Lord, when I rise above all limitations I think You are myself and I am Thyself.' So let us begin from the beginning.

Sri Ramakrishna is very practical. He speaks to us of three types of *ānanda*: *vishayānanda* i.e. the *ānanda* that comes to us through the contact of the senses with the sense objects; *bhajanānanda,* the *ānanda* that comes to us through *bhajana,* through Japa, through Dhyāna; and then finally comes *brahmananda* as the result of the realization of the Infinite Spirit. In spiritual life let us have as much *bhajanānanda* as we can. It is within the reach of all of us. The *ānanda* that comes to us through Japa, through Dhyāna of the Blissful Form of the Lord — let us have that. And as we have it, let us try to share this Ānanda with our fellow spiritual seekers. That is why, when devotees with such a spiritual outlook meet together, they repeat the Lord's Name, sing His glory. At least for the plane, something of the *ānanda* of the Supreme Being, something of the peace of the Supreme Spirit comes into our soul, but as I said, we should not stop with that. Our great teachers used to tell us always, 'as you advance, you help others to advance'. One who is illumined can alone be the real teacher; but in order to be of service to others one need not be at the beginning fully illumined. Now, I may be a student of a senior class and when teachers are lacking I can take one of the lower classes, I can be of service to those who are in the lower class. Let us not wait for fullest illumination. At every stage it is possible for us to be of service to our fellow beings.

The highest ideal, as Swami Vivekananda has said, is this: First let us ourselves be gods and then help others to be gods. If we advance to some extent, we can help others also to advance. Here comes the ideal: *ātmano mokshartham jagaddhitāya cha,* 'To work for our own illumination and spiritual emancipation and at the same time to render service to others.' As we improve, we also help others to improve. There is a wonderful prayer. We have it in the *Universal Prayers*: *Durjanah sajjano bhūyāt. Sajjanah śāntimāpnuyāt, śanto muchyeta bandhebhyo, muktaś-cānyān vimocayet,* 'Let the wicked become virtuous and the virtuous attain peace — tranquillity. Let the peaceful and tranquil attain illumination and freedom. Let the free help others to become free.' Let us do it in our own humble way. As we do our spiritual practices, as we progress in our spiritual path, let us try to be of service to others. So, my own individual spiritual practice and service to others — these are the two-fold ways which will help me to attain inner purity, which will help me to attain Divine Presence, Divine Love, Divine Bliss. There is the whole of this ideal before us, and let us proceed, each one in one's own way, towards this truth, step by step; let us be sure of every inch of the ground. And as we do our spiritual practice,

Sri Ramakrishna has said, 'If we move towards God one step, He comes towards us ten steps'. It is a fact to be realized in the world of Spirit. So proceed. The Lord will protect you. The Lord will guide you. The Lord, the Supreme Spirit, will fill your heart with Divine Presence, Purity, Love and Bliss.

Let us all offer our salutations to the Supreme Spirit, who dwells in the hearts of us all. He is the Supreme Principle of Existence, the Supreme Reality, the Supreme Light and the Supreme Self. Out of this infinite, all-pervading Spirit we all have come into being; in that we rest and unto that we return. Let us for a few moments meditate on the Infinite Spirit. Let us do it each in his own way. Let us try to feel something of the Divine Presence, Divine Love, and Divine Bliss. May the All-pervading, All-Blissful Divine Spirit, the Soul of our souls protect us all. May He guide us all. May He nourish us all. May He bless us all. May the teachings that we learn become fruitful and forceful through His Grace. May peace and harmony dwell amongst us all. Om Shantih, Om Shantih, Om Shantih.

Oh! Lord, all spiritual paths are like streams leading to Thee, the one ocean of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss. Thou art our Mother. Thou art our Father. Thou art our Friend. Thou art our Comrade. Thou art our Knowledge. Thou art our Wealth. Thou art Oh Lord! our all in all. From unreality lead us to Reality. From darkness lead us to Light. From death, lead us to Immortality and Bliss. Reach us through and through — Oh Lord! May we find Thee in our heart of hearts; May we discover Thee in all our fellow-beings. May we love Thee and serve Thee in all. May we thus realize the highest goal of human life. Om Shantih, Om Shantih, Om Shantih.

THE ROLE OF IDEALS AND THEIR FUNCTIONS: THE CONCEPT OF DHARMA

P. NAGARAJA RAO

THE *Upaniṣad* declares that the nature of a man is created by the nature of his thoughts. 'According as one acts, according as one behaves, so does one become. The doer of a good deed becomes good, the doer of evil becomes evil. One becomes virtuous by virtuous action, bad by evil action. Others, however, say that a person consists of desires. As is his desire so is his will; as is his will so is the deed he does; whatever deed he does, that he attains.'[1] The *Gītā* affirms that the nature of a man is determined by his faith. 'The faith of every man is in accordance with his natural disposition. Man is of the nature of his faith; what his faith is that verily he is.'[2]

Human life gains in significance and ardour when faith in ideals governs it. An ideal is a fundamental aspiration, which is realizable, but not yet realized, difficult but not impossible of achievement. It requires honest efforts of man and stern discipline to attain. It is attained through the exercise of man's freedom and his right choice. It is not automatic. We cannot reach it in a mechanical escalator. It does not grow like grass. It has strong forces opposing it, e.g. physical force, social pressures, and lurid temptations to human lust. One has to fight. It also implies sacri-

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[1] यथाकारी यथाचारी तथा भवति — साधुकारी साधुर्भवति, पापकारी पापो भवति; पुण्यः पुण्येन कर्मणा भवति, पापः पापेन। अथो खल्वाहुः काममय एवायं पुरुष इति; स यथाकामो भवति तत्क्रतुर्भवति, यत्क्रतुर्भवति तत्कर्म कुरुते, यत्कर्म

fices of one's comforts and props and indulgences. Human life acquires a status only if it is lived in the light of a creed or an ideal and a code of conduct.

Faith is a total commitment of our life to an ideal. The ideal we cherish must not seek to fly away from life and its realities. It must look at life steadily and see it whole. It involves the disciplining of the unruly desires, wavered impulses and strong emotions that shake and shatter us. The ideal must not be an 'antique' to be kept in the case of a museum. The ideal cherished must not be a passing thought or an occasional whim entertained. It must be fixed. It must claim total acceptance at our hands. When we say that the ideal must be fixed, it should not become inert as a statue. The ideal must be a living one exercising wide influence and pervading all the aspects of life. The ideal must not become a fixation or obsession resulting in the making of a maniac or a fanatic. A man must possess the idea but the ideas should not possess him. The ideal should be the servant of the spirit, to dominate the lower nature and bend it to the service of the higher. The ideal should influence character. 'Ideals shape character and living and makes the thought productive.' The "ideal" holds the equilibrium of society,[3] holds up the scales of justice[4] and regulates man's life. It is the principle of integration which makes for peace, harmony, and happiness. This ide comprehensively called Dharma is taught all possible ways by precept and exampl through stories and tales, in literature and a in the temples and on the stage, through t living examples of saints and *avatāras*. T ideal is the cement of society, the bond love and the chief means for the attainme of God.

In a revealing verse with powerful insig Manu observes : 'If one should make pea and live in harmony with Yama (t Principle of *dharma*) residing in the hearts men, there is no need to go to the holy Gange or Kurukshetra for purifying ourselves.'[5] T need to cherish the ideals and live in the light is the goal of human life. The one gre ideal put forth by the contemplative sain and sages, and the classical poets and thinke of India is the ideal of Dharma. Adherenc to the principle of Dharma brings in its tra all the good things of life. Towards the co clusion of the great epic *Mahabharata,* th compassionate assertion of Vyasa is 'I cry ou with uplifted arms, but none listens to me Out of Dharma comes wealth and the gratifi cation of legitimate desires, yet why is it no followed ?'[6]

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[3] धारणात्धर्म इत्याहु: धर्मेण विधृता: प्रजा: ।

[4] धर्म एव हतो हन्ति धर्मो रक्षति रक्षित: ।

[5] यमो वैवस्वतो देवो यस्त्वेष हृदि स्थित: ।
तेन चेदविवादस्ते मा गङ्गा मा कुरून्गम : ॥

[6] ऊर्ध्वबाहुर्विरौम्येष न कश्चिच्छृणोति मे ।
धर्मादर्थश्च कामश्च स किमर्थं न सेव्यते ॥

— *Mahabharatha*, Svargarohana Parva, 5. 62.

Everyone can see the sky, even the very worm crawling upon the earth sees the blue sky, but how very far away it is! So it is with our ideal. It is far away, no doubt, but at the same time, we know that we must have it. We must even have the highest ideal. Unfortunately in this life, the vast majority of persons are groping through this dark life without any ideal at all. If a man with an ideal makes a thousand mistakes, I am sure that the man without an ideal makes fifty thousand. Therefore, it is better to have an ideal. And this ideal we must hear about as much as we can, till it enters into our hearts, into our brains, into our very veins, until it tingles in every drop of our blood, and permeates every pore in our body. We must meditate upon it.

— Swami Vivekananda.

THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF THE BUDDHA

SUSANTA DE ALWIS

HE usefulness of all religions in the world day, and the urgent necessity for the peoples this world to live a spiritual way of life annot be over emphasized. We are living in period of history when the whole of mannd is on the brink of total annihilation, at time when certain Heads of States are prearing themselves and gearing their countries a war-footing owing to fear, distrust and atred of other countries. If we are to create e atmosphere of total peace, not merely the bsence of war but the conditions under which e can co-exist in the understanding that all isms' have the common objective of the welare of mankind, we should strive to create he defences of peace in the very minds of hese statesmen. The only way by which we an establish these bastions of peace is by piritual upliftment of ourselves and our leaders which in turn can only be done through eligion.

'Of all the teachers in the world the Buddha was one who taught us most to be self-reliant, who freed us not only from the bondages of our false values but from dependence on the invisible being or beings called God or Gods. He invited every one into a state of freedom which he called Nirvana. All must attain it one day and that attainment is a complete fulfilment of man,' said Swami Vivekananda speaking about the Buddha.

The late and revered Jawaharlal Nehru in his literary masterpiece, *The Discovery of India*, has described the Buddha in meditation in his own inimitable style :

> "Seated on the lotus flower, calm and impassive, above passion and desire, beyond the storm and strife of the world, so far away he seems, out of reach, unattainable, yet again we look and behind those still unmoving features there is a passion and emotion, strange and more powerful ... emotions we have known. His eyes are closed but some power of the spirit looks out of them and a vital energy fills the frame. The ages roll by, but the Buddha seems not so far away after all ; his voice whispers in the ears and tells us not to run away from the struggle but calm-eyed to face it and to see in life even greater opportunities for growth and advancement."

As I reflect on these two tributes I become humbly aware of the magnitude of the task which I have taken on myself, of presenting to you a glimpse of the life of this great Teacher, which will give you the background to an understanding of the fundamental tenets of the Buddha Dhamma.

In order to have a correct understanding of the life and teachings of the Buddha it is necessary to consider the conditions and the age in which he lived. The Buddha lived in the sixth century B.C., an era of great intellectual and social activity in different parts of the world. In India in the sphere of religion the Vedas still held great sway and the Brahmanas who were the custodians of this learning had become a hereditary priest-hood. Often these Vedic rites included animal sacrifice of a very cruel and revolting character. On the other hand, there were others who felt that man's natural attachment to worldly enjoyment and sensual pleasures prevented him from being mighty and powerful. They, therefore, resorted to austerity or self-mortification in its different forms to control the senses. Then there was another group which in their pursuit of the truth and mystery of existence, renounced home and family and engaged in meditation and self-development in the seclusion of the forest or as wandering mendicants. They did not believe in the extremes of self-mortification.

If one were to describe the situation, 'it was an atmosphere where religion was con-

joined with speculative philosophy and where a spirit of broad tolerance which embraced many schools of thought' prevailed. Discussions centred on questions such as : Did the world have a beginning in time or was it eternal ? Was there a soul apart from the body ? What was it like and what happened to it after death ? Was there a condition under which one could live and yet not live ? It was to men deeply engrossed with such ideas as these that the Buddha preached a new gospel which in its essence was as follows :

'To live mastered by the body, he said, or to live totally neglecting the body is equally wrong. There is a middle way, the way of good life. The good life is to be one's best in thought and word, in will and deed.' This discovery he proclaimed to the world in unequivocal terms. He announced : 'Wide open are the portals of immortality, let those that have faith and courage come and share their faith. Happy is the solitude of him who is full of joy, who has learned the truth, who sees the truth. Happy is freedom from malice in this world — self-restraint towards all beings that have life. Happy is freedom from lust in this world, getting beyond all desires, the putting away of that pride which comes from the thought, I am.' This truly is the highest message.

Let us, therefore, now dwell on the life of the Teacher who brought this message into the world. I do not propose to go into the details of the early part of his life as you in India would be very familiar with it. I would summarise it briefly :

The Buddha was born on the full moon day of the month of May in 623 B.C. in Lumbini Park. His father was King Suddhodhana who was the Ruler of the Sakyas, a proud clan of Kshatriya warriors from the foothills of the Himalayas, with his capital at Kapilavattu. His mother was the lady Maya. She was on her way to her parents' home to give birth to the child when unexpectedly the baby was born under the shade of a flowering Sal Tree.

After his birth the Brahmins who lived priests, astrologers and soothsayers in t King's court, read the auspicious marks the child's body and predicted its high destin He was named Siddhartha which means t all-prospering one or one whose purpose h been achieved. Seven of the eight Brahmi predicted that the Prince will be a Chakr varti, a world emperor, or a wise teache supremely enlightened one. The one disse tient, Kondanna, said : 'Oh King, this Princ will one day go in search of truth and becom a supremely enlightened Buddha.'

Queen Maha Maya, the mother, died o the seventh day after the birth of the child The baby was thereafter nursed by his mother' own sister, Prajapathi Gothami. Although th child was brought up amidst all abundanc and luxury, the father saw to it that his so received an education required of a prince He became skilled in many a branch of knowledge and in the arts of war, easily excelling others. King Suddhodhana was, therefore, naturally proud of him but he had also reason to be concerned. His son was not like other children for he would often be found sitting alone in deep contemplation. It is recorded in the Texts that although only seven years old when he was taken out for the annual ploughing festival with its pomp and pageantry which he watched in the company of his own attendant-women, he forgot his surroundings and entered into a deep state of trance seated cross-legged. This experience provided the strength and hope for the Prince later in his search of supreme enlightenment. King Suddhodhana, in view of what the soothsayers had predicted, took every precaution to prevent his son coming to know the sorrowful aspects of life. He provided him with three palaces for the three seasons with all the earthly joys of life. Everything that could give him knowledge of human misery and death was carefully kept away from his sight. At the age of sixteen he was married to the beautiful Yasodhara whose hand he won in an

After marriage he expressed a desire to see e outside world. The king agreed but made arrangements to ensure that wherever he ent the streets and houses were decorated id that there was a spirit of gaiety and festi-ty among the people. At the same time the ng made sure that the sick, the aged, the firm, the blind and the maimed were kept way from his sight. But on one occasion hen the Prince went driving with his chario-er Channa from the royal gardens he saw his amazement what his eyes had never een before — a man weakened with age and the last stage of decay. This was the first hock the Prince received.

The second was the sight of a man with nere skin and bones utterly unhappy, smit-en with disease, and strength gone from him.

On a third occasion he saw a group of ersons bearing on their shoulders the corpse of a dearly beloved kinsman. The Prince began to have a glimpse of the woes of the world. The more he came in contact with the world outside of his palace the more convinced he became that the world was lacking in true happiness. From his charioteer Channa he learnt further that even he, his beloved Princess Yasodhara and his kith and kin, all without exception, were subject to ageing, disease and death.

The next incident that stirred him was a recluse moving with measured steps, calm and serene, one who had renounced his home to live a life of purity, to seek the truth and solve the riddle of life. He turned homewards in deep contemplation nursing the possibility of renunciation but before he reached home he heard that a son had been born to Yaso-dhara, a fetter to his immediate plans.

As he pondered over all these cruel reali-ties of life, his determination to find a way out hardened. 'There is a getting born and a growing old, a dying and a being re-born. And from the suffering an escape is not known, even as from old age and death. How shall I escape? Surely there must be a way

as opposed to cold, and light as against dark-ness, there must likewise be happiness as opposed to sorrow.' He was thus overcome by a powerful urge to seek and win the death-less, to strive for deliverance from old age, illness, misery and death — to seek it for him-self and for all beings which suffer. Eventually, on the night of the full moon at the youth-ful age of twenty-nine he called Channa, his charioteer, to his side and riding his favourite horse, Kanthaka, left the palace and city unnoticed during the night to the banks of the river Anoma. Having cut his long hair with his sword and given over his princely clothes and ornaments to Channa, he bade him return and so began a long and tireless quest for knowledge that would lead him to the solution of the mystery of life.

For seven days he lived in solitude as an ascetic on the banks of the river Anoma. He did so because at that time many people in India believed that the way to happiness was by means of purification through asceticism and the more rigorous the asceticism the more thorough the purification. He came on foot to the city of Rajagaha begging his food from door to door. He first revolted against the sight of the mixture of hot and cold food but soon overcame it and took it merely to keep his body alive, to pursue his quest.

In his search for salvation he sought out famous teachers of religion of the time. He first went to Ālāra Kālāma and later on to Uddaka for advice. He acquired all the knowledge these teachers could give him, joining in their religious exercises which took him to the highest concentrative thought but there it ended. He realized that he was still far from his goal. Dissatisfied with anything short of enlightenment he declined their invi-tation to stay on and proceeded in his wander-ings until he reached the thick forest near Uruvela and applied himself in solitude to the severest penances and self-tortures. Soon five other ascetics who admired his fortitude and endurance joined him. They were Kondanna, Bhadiya, Bhappa, Mahanama and Asiia. For

six long years he subjected himself to rigorous self-mortification to test the belief that purification and final deliverance could only be achieved by such practices. In the Majjima Nikaya it is stated that he lived on leaves and roots, steadily reducing all food. He wore rags from dust heaps ; he slept among corpses, or on a bed of thorns. The utter paucity of nourishment left him a physical wreck as he described himself, " like waste, withered leaves became all my limbs". After six years of struggle he came to death's very door but still found himself nowhere near the goal. It became abundantly clear to him from his own experience that self-mortification was not the way to enlightenment but undiscouraged he sought new avenues to reach his goal. He realized that with the body so weakened he could not take the road to enlightenment. He then abandoned self-torture and extremism, taking the minimum of food so as to sustain himself. His five companions were disappointed at this and left him. Having regained his strength he resolved to make a final effort in complete solitude with determination and faith in his own purity and strength.

On the full moon day of the month of May when he was 35 years old he sat down in the evening at the foot of a fig tree with a strong determination, "Let my skin, sinews and bones shiver and wither ; let my flesh and blood dry up. I will not step up from this seat until I have attained supreme and absolute insight." As he sat there he went through his final and most strenuous struggle, the struggle against the inclinations and desires of the human heart. Indolence and pride, delusion, love of the world, craving for existence and enjoyment, fame, power, wealth, love of family life and all the delights and joys presented themselves to him in their most seductive forms. But he, cross-legged, sat there in perfect concentration, alert and strenuous and applied himself to the mindfulness on breathing gradually, cleansing his mind of all impurities and desires. He gained the knowledge of recollecting past births, gained the divine eye and beheld the disappearing and re-appearing of being in good stages of existence and in stages of war, each bearing according to his deeds. Then he applied his mind to the acquisition of the knowledge of destruction of the corruptions.

His struggle was crowned with success. He tore asunder the veil of ignorance and sensed the truth thus becoming the Buddha, the awakened one. He realized the truth of universal suffering, the truth of craving being the cause of sorrow, the truth that there is a state where sorrow is completely extinguished and happiness reigns and the truth that there is a way that leads to the conquest of suffering. He had found emancipation. His destiny had at long last been fulfilled.

The wondrous being who became the Buddha was indeed yet a man. In fact, as Buddhist writers have repeatedly pointed out, it is this essential humanity of the Buddha that shines out most perfectly through the canonical records of his life and activities. He lived with the people proving by his personal example that what he had become, they could, every one of them, become themselves and that we are all of us potential Buddhas. According to the teachings of Buddhism, there is in each one of us the germ of the Buddha ideal in different stages of development. It is this humanity that is the most striking thing about the Buddha. For forty-five years till his death at Kusinara at the age of 80 in 553 B.C. on the full moon day of May, his life was one of frequent activity, teaching and preaching, continuously travelling on foot, carrying the message of happiness to all those who would care to hear.

Now I propose to place before you the essence of the Buddha's teachings.

Before we consider the fundamental teachings of Buddhism I should like to invite your attention to the oft-posed question, " Is Buddhism a religion or a philosophy ? " Dr. G. P. Malalasekera has very lucidly answered this question. He says,

Some prefer to call it a religion, others a philosophy. In fact, it is both. In it the most lofty

religio-moral doctrines are united with the deepest philosophical truths to form one integrated whole. It enlightens its followers as to the nature of the universe and the laws reigning therein ; it discloses to man the essence of his being, shows him his true, higher destiny, extending beyond the fleeting earth-life, awakens his slumbering moral forces and faculties, kindles in him a desire for the good and noble, teaches him to be humane, patient, and unselfish, gives him consolation in sorrow, confidence at the moment of death and declares to him the way that leads to the highest emancipation from unrest, sorrow and suffering to perfect peace, supreme happiness and consummate emancipation. Thus, Buddhism is a religion.

It is likewise a philosophy. It demands of its adherents belief only through a conviction gained and confirmed by one's own investigation and examination and by earnest reflection. Its doctrines are not based on the will of an incomprehensible god, creator, or a supernatural revelation but on the natural constitution of the world and on the laws of life which are open to all to discover for themselves, should they so desire. It does not seek to frighten the evil-doer by threatening him with eternal punishment. It seeks rather to clear up the eye of the erring one, obscured by earthly delusion, so that he may be able to see the truth. It leads the honest struggle on the way to spiritual development and moral self-perfection up to a standpoint where everything transitory lies behind him as unsubstantial appearance and where prejudice, doubt and illusion disappear in the light of knowledge. It is thus a philosophy in the best sense of the word.

He proclaimed for the first time the *Dhamma in* a discourse called the Dhamma Chakka Pavatanna Sutta (the foundation of the kingdom of righteousness) at Isipatana, the Deer Park near Benaras to the five ascetics who had at one time practised self-mortification with him. This discourse is universally known as the Four Noble Truths and contains the essence of the Buddha's doctrine in a most lucid form. I can do no better than to quote the Four Noble Truths as proclaimed by the Buddha in his first discourse-:—

There are two extremes that he who strives for deliverance should avoid. One extreme, the craving for the satisfaction of passions and other pleasures of the senses, is vulgar, base, degrading and worthless. The other extreme, exaggerated asceticism and self-mortification, is painful, vain and also worthless. Only the Middle Path which the Tathagata has found, avoids these two wrong ways and opens the eyes, bestows insight, and leads to wisdom, to deliverance, to enlightenment, to Nirvana.

It is the Noble Eightfold Path, namely, right views, right aspiration, right speech, right deeds, right livelihood, right endeavour, right mindfulness, right concentration.

Now, this is the Noble Truth of Suffering :—

Birth is suffering, disease is suffering, death is suffering ; sorrow, grief, lamentation, pain are suffering ; union with unpleasant things is suffering ; separation from the beloved is suffering ; unsatisfied desire is suffering ; in short the whole five groups of clinging are suffering.

Now, this is the Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering, namely, verily it is this thirst, this craving for existence, and enjoyment, which leads to rebirth ; seeking satisfaction now in this way, now in that. It is the craving for the satisfaction of the passions, the craving for existence in this life or hereafter, and the craving for not to be what one dislikes.

Now this is the Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering, namely, verily it is the complete destruction, conquering, annihilation of these cravings.

Now this is the Noble Truth of the Path that leads to the Cessation of Suffering : Verily it is this Noble Eightfold Path, namely : right views, right aspiration, right speech, right deeds, right livelihood, right endeavour, right mindfulness, right concentration.

It is fundamentally the teaching of emancipation. Emancipation must needs imply the existence of evil from which men must be freed. Both facts are equally important as he said it : "One thing do I teach and one only — suffering and the extinction of suffering. The two are inseparable. They are complementary."

If you reflect on the substance of his first sermon, you will notice that it does not for instance give any account of the creation of the world. No promise is held out for exemption from pain and evil in return for prayer or ritual or sacrifice nor any favourable intercession by the divine powers. Without proclaiming himself a Saviour, willing and able to take upon himself the sins of mankind, he declares that each man and woman must bear the burden of their own evil actions. He

categorically affirms that no God, even, can do for any man that work of self-conquest and self-emancipation which in the teaching of the Buddha stands for salvation.

Buddhism, therefore, is neither optimistic nor pessimistic but on the contrary teaches all truth that lies mid-way between them. He perceived the universality of sorrow and did prescribe a cure for this universal sickness of humanity. At the same time he did not expect his followers to be constantly brooding over this fact and lead a miserable and unhappy life. He exhorted them to be always happy and cheerful ; for joy is one of the factors of enlightenment. Buddhism is saturated with a spirit of free inquiry and complete tolerance. It is a teaching of the "open mind and the sympathetic heart". The starting point of Buddhism is reasoning or understanding—the Sammaditti. To the seekers of truth the Buddha says : "Do not accept anything on mere hearsay ; do not accept anything by mere tradition ; do not accept anything on account of mere rumours ; do not accept anything by mere supposition ; do not accept anything by mere inference ; do not accept anything merely because it agrees with your preconceived notions ; do not accept anything merely because it seems acceptable ; do not accept anything thinking that the ascetic is to be respected by us. But when you know for yourselves these things are involved, these things are blame-worthy, and so on, then indeed do reject them." When a Buddhist worships an image he does not do so expecting worldly favours but pays homage to what it represents. When an understanding Buddhist offers flowers and whilst doing so in a spirit of homage to one whom he respects, he also appreciates the comparison, that like the flower which fades, the body is also subject to decay. Similarly, when he lights a lamp which dispels darkness he thinks of the Dhamma which lights the way to enlightenment. Buddhism appeals more to the intellect than to the emotion. It is concerned more with re-shaping the lives of the devotees than with their numerical strength. It must be said to its credit that throughout its peaceful march of 2,500 years no drop of blood was shed in the name of religion, no monarch wielded the sword to propagate the Dhamma and no conversion was made either by force or by any repulsive methods.

Apart from the four Noble Truths and the Noble Eight-fold Path, the doctrine of the Karma and re-birth is another essential teaching of the Buddha.

I am sure there must have been many an occasion when you would have yourselves asked, why the world is full of inequalities ; why is it that one should be inferior and another superior ; why should one be born rich and another poor ; why is it that some people should be born blind, deaf, deformed, maimed and die young while others are strong and healthy and live to the age of 80 or 100.

These questions, I submit, are satisfactorily answered by Buddhism. This variation has often been attributed to heredity and environment. It cannot be denied that they are partly instrumental but they are not totally responsible for those distinctions and differences that exist among people. Heredity perhaps explains only the similarities but what of the differences. Heredity for instance, cannot give us a satisfactory explanation why one of a noble family should be a criminal or why one in a poor family should turn out to be wealthy and honoured. According to Buddhism, these differences can be explained as due not only to heredity and environment but also to our own Karma or in other words, to our inherited past actions and present deeds. The Buddha himself explained this in reply to an inquiry when he said : "Every living being has Karma as its own, its inheritance, its cause, its kinsman, its refuge. Karma is that which differentiates all living beings into low and high states. Inherent in Karma is the power of producing its due effect, the cause produces the effect, the effect explains the cause ; the seed produces the fruit ; the fruit explains the seed as both are inter-related." According to Buddhism there are three factors necessary

for the re-birth of a human, i.e. the formation of a foetus in the mother's womb. They are the female ovum, the male's sperm and the Kāmmic energy, Vega. This Kāmmic energy is sent forth by a dying individual at the moment of his death to a new mother's womb ready for conception. "As long as this Kāmmic force exists, there is re-birth, for beings are merely the visible manifestation of this invisible Kāmmic force. In death the organic life ceases but the Kāmmic force which hitherto actuated it has not been destroyed." Birth is, therefore, preceded by death and death is preceded by birth. As a Western writer puts it: "Whether we believe in a past existence or not it forms the only reasonable hypothesis which bridges certain gaps in human knowledge concerning certain facts of every-day life." Psychologists, psychiatrists, medical men and hypnotists have conducted experiments in over 45 cases from fourteen different countries where previous births were recalled and they have been forced to admit the doctrine of re-birth as the only scientific explanation. I refer you to the researches of Dr. E. L. Stevenson and Professor C. J. Ducasse. I quote the Ven. Nyanatiloka Thero: "What is called the character of man is in reality the sum of the sub-conscious tendencies produced partly by the pre-natal, partly by the present volitional activity of Kamma. These tendencies may during life-time become an inducement to wholesome and unwholesome volitional activities or Kamma by body, speech or mind." If, however, this thirst for life is fully extinguished then there will be no new re-birth. This doctrine of re-birth should be distinguished from the theory of reincarnation or transmigration because Buddhism denies the existence of an unchanging or eternal soul.

The other essential teaching which I would like to refer to is the Buddha's conception of Nibbana. This process of birth and death continues *ad infinitum* until this Kāmmic force is transmitted so to say to Nibbana — the ultimate goal of a Buddhist. Nibbana is the Pali version of *Nirvana*. It means the extinction of lust, hatred and ignorance. Nibbana is not to be found in any place nor is it a sort of haven where a transcendental ego resides. It is a state which is dependent upon the body itself, it is an attainment which is within the reach of all, it is attainable even in present life. As Edwin Arnold attempts to describe it: "If any teach Nibbana is to cease, say unto them they lie; if any teach Nibbana is to live, say unto such they err."

The way to Nibbana is a positive way of conduct, a life of extreme physical and intellectual exertion, till one attains that freedom beyond which there is no further. Such a positive code of conduct surely then cannot lead one to a negative state. The tendency, however, is to regard Nibbana as a negative state because no one could point it out. That Nibbana is something positive is amply testified by the Buddha's own words: "There is 0 disciples, a state that is not born, not produced, not created, not compounded. Were there not 0 disciples, this state not born, not produced, not created and not compounded, there would be no possible exit for what is born, produced, created and compounded."

From this we can, therefore, conclude that there must exist a sorrowless and deathless Nibbana which is opposed to the sorrowful and changing Samsara. "Nibbana is nothing but a state which is to be experienced and it exists not before it is experienced, nor does it exist once one has completed that experience."

As you will readily appreciate, it is not possible for anybody within a short space to lead you into a full and complete understanding of this deep and rich doctrine of the Buddha. What I have attempted is to place before you certain essential teachings as it strikes my mind, to provide you as it were, food for thought for a further study of the Dhamma which you can yourselves read, understand, verify and then accept, as the only way to supreme enlightenment.

May all beings be happy.

MEMOIRS OF SWAMI ADBHUTANANDA

(A free translation of the Bengali book, *Smritikatha*)

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

LATU MAHARAJ continued: 'The Lord's sports are so wondrous that there is no release even in losing oneself. After losing, there is a start for refinding — refinding in an ampler space with plenitude in and around, plenitude of power and sweetness, of splendour and beauty. Take, for example the waters of the river: Does their cycle come to an end with their merging in the ocean? Are they not transformed into vapour by the sun's heat, do they not climb up again into the sky, and again come down to the earth? The beauty of *sādhana* is also like that. Once the *sādhaka* loses himself in the Lord; the Lord then, if He so pleases, finds him out and puts him on the way to refind himself transformed— this game of losing and refinding is — may be — never-ending. It never gets stale, it never tires the *sādhaka*; newer, sweeter, grander experiences urge him on and on. *Sādhana* thus is unending, the powers that urge one on are infinite. But whose *sādhana*? Whose are the powers? Of the Ātman, of course, which is infinite in more ways than we can conceive of.' Biharibabu, who was all concentration, asked him, 'Maharaj, if this be the mystery of *sādhana,* what is the use of losing oneself and again of finding oneself out?'

Lātu Maharaj: 'It is the Divine sport. It goes on like that. There is no logical "why" in that. The sportive Lord plays His game. In the game of hide-and-seek touching the granny completes one game for the player. But he can play again when the granny winks him on. The peculiarity of this game of *sādhana* is that it is the granny, the Lord Himself, who has become the players as well He tastes the release from bondages and again does He accept bondages anew; and in these self-imposed bondages He shows paths to freedom to others. Simply inconceivable are His sports! Nobody can understand an iota of this, if He Himself does not will it. Here His grace is all in all, from beginning to end.'

From the above we can surmise Lātu Maharaj's way of *sādhana* clearly. He did not like merely to remain immersed in the Ocean of Brahman but wanted to join in the Divine sports as well. This explains his double mood during this period. Sometimes he was seen inert as a log of wood — altogether lost to the outer world and to himself. At other times he was a merry minion, joy jetting out of him in all directions. In one mood he was experiencing that, 'Brahman alone is real, everything else is unreal'. In another mood he was feeling palpably, 'He has become all these'. We find, scattered throughout his talks, statements bearing out both the moods.

Mahendranath Datta writes in his pamphlet on "Lātu the Anchorite": 'For some time Lātu Maharaj was really in that state where a man could say he was in the world but not of it. He could not mix with anyone as before. He was, throughout the good portion of the day, found sitting quite absent-minded. His mind would not function in the normal way. At that time in all matters 'yea' and 'nay' were both the same to him. For none had he hatred, slight or contempt, or attachment, love or affection; for none had he a curse or blessing; there was neither welcome to nor rejection of anything of the world. At that time the world was to him a revolving wheel through whose holes things were seen hazily

Below is what Navagopal Ghosh states about Lātu Maharaj: 'At one time Lātu Maharaj used to come to our house. A look at him would give this idea to anyone that all his transactions with the world were over. He had no personal desires nor any duty to anyone. He had no relish for food when it would come, nor did he feel any want or suffering when it would not. A glance at him would convince anyone of his absolute desirelessness.'

In 1893 Girishbabu said to one devotee, 'If you want to see a monk as described in the *Gītā* go and see Lātu'. He did not know what 'a monk as described in the *Gītā*' meant. So he asked what that meant, to which Girishbabu replied, 'You have not read, I see, the second chapter of the *Gītā*, where it describes the state of one whose intellect is fixed (on the Reality). The full description of the *Gītā* you can see demonstrated in his personality.' Saying this he explained all those verses of the *Gītā* to him. (Narrated by Avinash Chandra Ganguly.)

In 1893-94 what a devotee saw of Lātu Maharaj has been described in the pages of the *Udbodhan* by Swami Siddhananda. Biharibabu echoed it in the pages of the *Basumati*. Siddhananda writes: 'A devotee, an eye-witness said, "At that time he (Lātu Maharaj) would tie some dry gram in the corner of his towel and keep it dipped in the waters of the Ganga — the idea being that he could take the grains when they, soaked in water, would become soft. One day he had put the gram as was his wont tied in a piece of cloth and placed on it a piece of brick. It was ebb-tide then. Sometime after the flood-tide set in. Absorbed in his meditation, he was unaware of it. When he came to his normal consciousness he found the river in full flood-tide. His gram! There was no knowing if the towel was swept away. He sat still. What else could he do? When the tide was gone he found his piece of cloth and gram exactly

The following incident is from his own lips: 'One day I was sitting absent-minded on a boat loaded with straw. The crew did not notice me. When the boat weighed anchor I did not know. When it crossed Dakshineswar I became aware of the situation. At my request the crew helped me and I got down. When returning, I went to the temple garden and brother Ramalal fed me sumptuously.'

There is another incident of this period, similar to the above. He narrated it to a devotee. 'I used to pass the whole of the noon at a bathing place near the Snaneswara and nights at Prasanna Kumar Tagore's. At 11 p.m. or so I would climb the terrace of the *chāndni* and meditate and count beads.'

The devotee asked: 'What did you do when it rained, Maharaj?'

Lātu Maharaj: 'Why, near the *ghat* there used to be many empty railway wagons; I would get into one. When the rain would stop I would get down. Once it so happened that I got into one wagon and did not know when it was dragged away by the engine. Next day a number of porters were asking me to leave the wagon. I asked them where I was. They said, "At Chitpore". What to do? I had to walk up to the Baghbazar *ghat*. Since then I left entering a wagon. When it rained I would get down from the terrace and take to a corner of the *chāndni*. The constables at the *chāndni* knew me and would not trouble me.'

Mahendrababu writes: 'This state of nonchalance of Lātu Maharaj lasted for two years and a half. After that he attained abiding peacefulness. Serene gravity and sweetness became a permanent feature of his personality. In broken Bengali interlarded with his Chapra *patois*, he used to give out new thoughts and sentiments. They were rich in their depth and variety.'

It appears that seven or eight years after the passing away of the Master Lātu Maharaj had his *nirvikalpa samādhi* a second time. From his own words we are led to guess it. He once

any number of times or whenever he wants it. There are many *sādhakas* who have tasted it but once. There are many more who could not reach it even once in the whole span of life. His grace on me is unending. So after making me labour for it for eight years only He graciously lifted me up to that state again. One day I was seated on the bank of the Ganga, when I saw an effulgence coming out of the waters of the river. It went on growing in size till at last it filled the sky, the earth, and the intervening space. Inside that infinite effulgence there were numberless other effulgences. As I was looking on I lost myself completely. I did not know what happened next. When, however, I returned from that wondrous region I remained in an infinite ecstatic joy. O the joy! It cannot be expressed in words. The heaviness of heart that I used to feel continuously after the passing away of the Master vanished into thin air, never to return again. Everything seemed to be soaked to saturation in *ānanda*.'

After this experience he left the bank of the Ganga and came to Puri. Scriptures enjoin travels after *samādhi*. Returning from there he again used to live on the bank of the Ganga. It was during this time we found him listening attentively to the Puranic recitals describing Divine sports, which continued for eight months without a break.

CHAPTER XVIII

By the end of December, 1897 Lātu Maharaj returned from Jaipur to Baghbazar, Calcutta and stayed at Balarambabu's house. Swamiji (Swami Vivekananda) asked him to come over to Nilambarbabu's house where the Math was situated, but he did not agree. He said, 'I am comfortably lodged here. Yours is but a small house and so many people are already there'.

We have heard Lātu Maharaj say that when Swamiji returned from the West he was invited by Navagopal Babu to perform the worship of Sri Ramakrishna in connexion with the inauguration ceremony of his newly built house. There, after the *puja*, the Swami composed off-hand a Sanskrit couplet which had since been adopted as Sri Ramakrishna's *praṇāma-mantra*, the *mantra* for prostrating at the Master's holy feet ('*Sthāpakaya*' etc.).

'That year Master's birthday celebration was performed at two places: (*a*) At Dakshineswar, organized by Kishori babu; Haramohan collected money for this; (*b*) at Dans' big courtyard in front of the Rāsa temple of Sri Krishna; it was organized by brother Yogin and old Gopaldā. Yogin worked so hard that after the celebration he fell ill.

'When, I heard Yogin was ill I went to

"You see, Lātu, this illness will not be cured. But do you know what diet the doctors prescribe? They say, 'You must take pomegranate juice, the fine well-fried portion of *luchi*, soup of *māgur* fish, etc.' Just look at their intelligence and sense of suitability! These are meant for the *bhogis*, men given to sense enjoyment. They have money, they have men to prepare these things. We are *sādhus*, we have none except the Lord. We are to maintain ourselves by begging. Is it becoming of us to take such things? What do you say?"

'To that I said, "Look, how you talk. When one falls sick special diet is necessary. For you, they are diet, not articles of enjoyment. Is it wrong to take diet, as recommended by doctors?"'

Yogin: 'I know all that. But who will supply?'

Lātu Maharaj: 'Why do you say so? What are we for? We will do all that for you.'

Yogin: 'It needs no mention. But—I tell you a secret. (Holy) Mother wants that my wife should come and prepare all these for me. What is your opinion regarding this? I am a Sannyasin. Should I take the services

proposal, coming though it is from Holy Mother herself. My mind rebels.'

Lātu Maharaj : 'When Mother herself says this where is the occasion for doubt? You should not entertain it. It would not involve transgression.'

Yogin Maharaj : 'No, no. You have not caught the point. If I agree people will say, "Strange are the ways of the disciples of Ramakrishna. They are *sādhus* and yet take the services of their former wives!" We must not give them occasion to speak like that.'

Lātu Maharaj : '(Excitedly) Throw such stuff to the waste-paper basket. Do they desist from such talks even when our behaviour is correct to minutest things? Throw their words to the winds. If we do not transgress righteousness what do their words matter, their howlings? Who will believe them? You, brother,—I entreat you—obey Mother's orders implicitly.'

'Still Yogin hesitated and said "Whomsoever I ask I get the same reply. Even you did not prove an exception! Nobody places himself in my position and answers it. What more have I to say? I know it definitely, this disease will not be cured, however much people may serve and nurse me. And yet to yield —!"

'I told him, "Don't utter such inauspicious words. Why do you repeat 'It will not get cured'. His will can do everything. If he (Master) wants to take you to him all our efforts will be of no avail; and if he wants you here for his work your will to the contrary will be useless. Why then should you think all that and hesitate to obey Holy Mother?" Do you know what he said in answer to this? "You are right, brother, who am I, a non-entity, to oppose? Let his will be done."

'When Yogin's wife came to serve him I came away from that place. His disease actually went on worsening. Brother Vivekananda returned from the West and made special arrangement for his treatment. But nothing availed. He wanted to take him away from Calcutta for a change. Yogin did not yield. At last it was arranged that morning and evening he would be taken out in a boat on the Ganga. Sometimes I used to accompany him on the boat. Oh, the conversation! One day brother Vivekananda showed him from the boat the Math premises and the building.'

So far as our information goes Lātu Maharaj returned to the Yogadyana at Kankurgachi by the end of October, 1898. One day Swami Vivekananda went to see ailing Ramachandra Datta. The latter then occupied the room on the first floor. Lātu Maharaj said, 'Both talked long over many matters pleasantly. Then Ramababu felt like going out for a couple of minutes. The Swami took Ramababu's slippers up in his hands and placed them near the latter's feet. At that Ramababu cried out, "O Bilé, Bilé, what are you doing, what have you done? You are a Sannyasin. For you to do this!" In reply Swamiji said, "Ramadā, am I not that old Bilé of yours? Have I forgotten what you have done for me (referring obviously to Ramababu's advice to him to meet Sri Ramakrishna if he really wanted to know what religion was)?"

In November, the same year, Lātu Maharaj was seen on the Kali-puja night at the Math at Nilambar Babu's house. That day Holy Mother sanctified the new Math ground with the dust of her feet. Referring to this event, Lātu Maharaj spoke to a devotee, 'That day Mother visited the Math ground and worshipped Master herself. That day they (the apostles) took the dust of her feet individually and collected and kept it in a casket. This is worshipped even to day at the Math (?). Mother, was very pleased with the Math ground. Observing that the pinnacles of the Kali temple at Dakshineswar could be seen from there, she remarked, "How nice! people coming here will see them and will be reminded of (what happened) there".'

(*To be continued*)

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN REALISATION COMES

SWAMI GNANESWARANANDA

THE question has been asked again and again as to what happens to one who has realized the Truth. It is a very practical question. We have been reading the descriptions, in the *Vivekacūḍamaṇi*, of the state of ecstasy that aspirants realize after the highest experience of the Truth. Of course, it is impossible to give any true description of that state of ecstasy. It can only be expressed vaguely. In attaining something we have long looked forward to attain, we have, more or less, an idea of ecstasy. Perhaps a sudden glimpse of ecstasy overwhelms us. If we can remember the highest form of happiness, or ecstasy, we have ever experienced, and then imagine that it is multiplied a thousand-fold and continued for the longest period conceivable, that will give some idea of the ecstasy of God-realization, or the attainment of Freedom. Jñāna Yoga emphasizes that phase of realization, the attainment of absolute Freedom.

Now, what conception do we usually have regarding ecstasy? How do we analyse it? We think that something has happened which has stirred up some faculties in us so that a glandular change has taken place within us, resulting in our being happy. This is true, and not true. No doubt something has happened which has made us realize a state of ecstasy. As an example, suppose you were told that a very dear friend of yours was dead. After a long time, suddenly he comes and stands in front of you — alive! What is your reaction? You are dumbfounded. You are in a state of extreme happiness, ecstasy, but none of your faculties work; you can express nothing. Then, of course, in a few seconds, the low tide of the ecstasy comes, and you embrace your friend, and talk to him, almost incoherently at first, with tears of joy in your eyes. In the height of ecstasy no communication, no outburst of expression is possible, because ecstasy is such that it robs you of everything else. It occupies the *whole* of your being.

Now what is ecstasy? Can we analyse it scientifically and psychologically? I might say that it is not only a pleasant happening that can put you into an ecstasy. In fact, pleasure and pain do not exist in the state of ecstasy. It is a state which is neither pleasurable nor painful. It can only be described in terms of negation. No matter what the nature of the stimulus is, whether painful or pleasurable, a state comes when you eliminate all your functions and faculties. Your Self, alone, remains in its own intrinsic, unagitated condition. And that is the state of ecstasy. It is a state when you exist in your primordial, native, natural state of existence, in the absence of all agitating conditions. Bliss, in fact, is the absence of all disturbing conditions. That is your real nature. It is not borrowed, not generated. Stimulus has something to do with it, but it does not produce that state. The point I want to establish is that our real Self is our existence in the state of non-agitation, and it is for that reason that we call it blissful. And you are aware of that condition. It is not a fainting spell, you know! It is a state of existence; it is a state of bliss; it is a state of knowledge; and the realization of this is nothing but the capability of getting into that native state of your Self, at will. That is meditation. That is the state of divine ecstasy.

The student in the *Vivekacūḍamaṇi* (beginning with Sloka No. 480) describes his state of ecstasy. He is describing how he has eliminated this and that. Where is the phenomenal universe? Where has the mind gone? There is one continuous current which flows. As we have studied earlier, when the instruction was given to him the teacher emphasized the need to learn the art of eliminating from the

Self the gross, external world. If you shut your senses the external world will be partially eliminated. Then it still exists in your memory. By shutting the external 'doors' you have gone in one step. But another wall stands in front of you. It is the wall of thoughts and memories. Your mind then turns over the pages of your picture-album of memories. You have to apply a different technique to eliminate this. After eliminating the other two you find that there is still a wall — the wall of self-consciousness, that 'I am' feeling. Although your self-consciousness has expanded, having been freed from the limiting conditions of the senses and other faculties, yet it does not allow you to get into the state of final ecstasy. The ego-consciousness, the 'I am' consciousness remains. When the self-consciousness is free from the 'I am' feeling, when the 'I' vanishes, you merge into the ocean of Reality, which is bliss. That is ecstasy. You are full of bliss; in knowledge complete, and in existence limitless. For that matter, you are Free.

Now, I would like to point out here the difference between two sorts of statements: Argumentative statements, when you feel that you have to establish the truth of your position by argument and statements made with the force of realization. By making an argumentative statement you stimulate the power of reasoning in your hearers, but by making a statement based on realization you convince the mind of the hearer, without his having to go through reasoning and argument. This brings to my mind a beautiful incident.

You remember that Swami Vivekananda was for some time, as a youth, under the influence of agnosticism. He was born a mystic, but he wanted to verify everything before he would believe it. He even corresponded with a leading agnostic of that day, Herbert Spencer, who appreciated the intelligence of this young man from India. Whenever he had the opportunity of coming in touch with a religious leader, Swami Vivekananda, who was then still in his teens, would make it a point to talk with him. He embarrassed many by his direct question: 'Sir, have you seen God?' You can imagine the nerve it takes to say, 'No,' especially if the man cares for his prestige! Instead of answering directly, most people would begin to reason with him. Swami Vivekananda was sick and tired of having such intellectual 'wrestlings'. When he came to Ramakrishna, he asked the same question, point-blank: 'Sir, have you seen God?' And Ramakrishna replied, unequivocally, 'Yes, my boy.' After that, Swami Vivekananda was non-plussed; it seemed that there was nothing else to be asked. Somehow, Vivekananda stammered, 'How?' And Ramakrishna replied, 'Why, just as I see you and you see me.' 'Is it possible for someone else to see Him?' asked the young Vivekananda. 'Of course it is,' was the answer, 'if I can see Him, you also can.'

In the Sanskrit language there is an expression, 'Siddhānta Vākyaṁ', meaning the successful, the final climax of speech or utterance. A statement which has attained the climax of success. Such a statement can only be made by the power of realization, and it can only come from a living source. If Ramakrishna tells you, you are Brahman, what a tremendous difference it makes than if I say so! His is a 'Siddhānta' expression. Blessed is the man who has the opportunity of contacting, even by reading, Siddhānta expressions that do not raise doubts, but take him into a new region.

Do not think that the 'Siddhānta' expression is something you accept through reverence, awe, or fear. What you accept in that way does not sink very deep within you. You may be overpowered by a great personality, but when you come home you find that the statements he made are fomenting and creating many objections in your mind. Suppose you go to a great scholar and you hear from him a profound statement; you feel sure it must be true. You accept it, but later that statement begins to throw up bubbles of doubt and argument in your mind. Know that that was not a 'Siddhānta' statement. The distinguishing feature, the criterion of a 'Sid-

dhānta' statement is that it takes you out of the region of doubt. You might not be able to realize the truth of the statement immediately, but doubt will vanish. It comes that way only from a living source. I can speak of that with emphasis from my own experiences with living sources of power. As we cannot all have these experiences we have to be stimulated by argument and reasoning.

There is a humorous story told about one of the devoted householder disciples of Sri Ramakrishna, Rama Chandra Dutta. In his enthusiasm, Rama Chandra wrote a book about Ramakrishna's teachings, explaining what he meant by the various things he said. He would ask the newcomers to read his book, so that they would be able to understand what Ramakrishna taught. Swami Vivekananda, who was a cousin of Rama Chandra, used to joke with him, saying, 'If Ramakrishna cannot make himself understood, the chemist will explain him!' (Rama Chandra was a homoeopathic doctor and a chemist). It is like that. A chemist can help another chemist; we can argue and indulge in explanatory talk *ad infinitum* but when we hear a 'Siddhānta Vākya' there is no need for these. All our doubts vanish.

We started with the question: What happens to one who has attained the highest state of realization? In the Upaniṣads there are three conditions, describing that state. First, all the knots of the heart (the inner being) are cut, are severed. Secondly, all doubts are removed, and thirdly, all Karma dies out.

The 'knot' is taking the unreal for the Real. That is the fundamental knot. If you can loosen that one, all other knots will be loosened automatically. In Sanskrit 'Granthi' means knot. 'Chittasya Granthi' means the tie or the knot that fastens the Chit with matter. The thing that ties up Reality and appearance creates confusion. It is difficult to distinguish them. That is the 'knot', and that being removed all other knots, of egoism and selfishness, are removed as a matter of course. Then we have permanent recognition of the Reality, as distinguished from the appearance.

'All doubts are removed.' Doubts appear as the result of not knowing the truth. When you have known the truth there is no doubt. What a state that is, when knowledge flows uninterruptedly! You will find that a good percentage of your problems arise out of doubt. When you read Schopenhauer, and some other Western scholars, you will find that they also speak of recognition of the truth, 'without doubt'. Doubts vanish forever when you hear a real 'Siddhānta' expression. Even when you read such expressions your mind is led away from doubt. Hence, the importance of reading books which quote 'Siddhānta' statements.

'All Karma dies out.' Karma is a technical expression. The dying out of your Karma means that you do not forge any new chains to bind you down. We do things impelled by a cause, according to the law of causation, we all know that. The chain of causation controls a good part of our lives. When you realize the highest truth, that chain is broken, because you no longer act from a sense of ego. Your actions, as a free agent, cannot bind you and create any further Karma.

Now let us read these verses starting with No. 495, to see how they are records of 'Siddhānta Vākyaṁ', or statements made by a man of realization. He has realized his Self as the Self of all. He has complete realization of the essence, Chit, that of which knowledge is composed; that which comprises the subject and the object. He is established in Brahman, which is immovable and actionless, like Mt. Sumeru (reference is to a story from the *Adhyatma Ramayan*?). He knows himself as the 'ocean of Bliss'. His ego-consciousness has vanished. He is full of Bliss. Fullness knows no agitation.

RAJA YOGA — RESTATED

(Continued from the previous issue)

BRAJ BIHARI NIGAM

Definition of Raja Yoga

Patañjali defines yoga as 'restraining the mind-stuff (*citta*) from taking forms (*vṛttis*)' (sūtra I-2). Complete mastery over the mind and its modifications is the aim of yoga. The author of the *Sarvadarśanasaṁgraha* discusses both the negative aspect (*nirodhārtha*) and the implied positive aspect (*saṁyogārtha*) of the above definition. Patañjali (according to whom '*yujir*' is the root of the 'yoga') and Yājñavalkya, (according to whom, yoga is the union of jīvātman and Paramātman) both support the positive aspect (*saṁyogārtha*) of yoga. Vyāsa (the commentator of the Yoga-sūtra) also takes the positive meaning of 'yoga' as *samādhi,* but, Madhvācārya does not accept this meaning on the ground that *samādhi* is only a part of the whole yoga.[14] According to him, Patañjali gives the negative aspect (*nirodhārtha*) of yoga and Bhoja also takes it as the separation between *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*. Vijñānabhikṣu gives a synthetic meaning of yoga : 'the inhibition of functions of the mind which leads to the absolute abidance of the Spirit (Puruṣa) in his real nature.'[15]

Thus, in Rāja yoga also, the meaning of 'yoga' is *samatvam* (equanimity of mind). The yogic practices will enable a man to arrest the modifications of his mind and thus bring it to equanimity. Such a mind, free from all pains, will lead us to our original blissful nature. This is the ideal to be realized through *samādhi*.

Characteristics of Raja Yoga

1. Rāja Yoga is an applied practical science, of the mind, which undertakes the methods of inhibiting its modifications. It proposes to start from the internal world to study internal nature and through that control the whole—both internal and external worlds.[16] The eight-fold yoga is to be truthfully practised to achieve control over the vagaries of mind. Mind has immense powers and they can be made manifest during the process of inhibition of the modifications of the mind.

2. It is individualistic in its application. The yogic practices cannot be applied by another, they are to be self-applied to check the mental modifications, as the *Gītā* says, a man can lift himself by himself, for the Self alone is the friend of the self (VI-5).

3. It quickens the process of unfoldment of mind. For Śrī Aurobindo it is the shortest way to arrive at the largest development of spiritual power.[17] Patañjali has indicated that for the extremely energetic aspirants success is speedier (I-21). By Rāja Yoga one can achieve control over the mind and attain perfection in one life which millions fail to achieve in myriads of lives. It advocates a firm faith in the personality of man who by strenuous efforts can quicken the speed of evolution towards perfection.

4. Rāja Yoga does not pre-suppose any dogma or religion. It lays down universal and general principles for controlling one's own mind. As it is an experimental science, the truth of its precepts can be realized by any man who experiments with it. As such, the

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14 *Sarvadarsanasamgraha* (Khemraj Shrikrishnadas, Bombay), p. 276-77.

15 *Yogasarasamgraha,* edited by Jha, (T.P.H.). p. 2.

16 Vivekananda, Raja Yoga, p. 9.

17 On Yoga, p. 699.

question of faith does not arise. Though Patañjali talks of results of misery and action and mentions that success can be achieved by devotion to Him (I-23), yet, he regards Īśvara only as a more elevated *puruṣa* (I-24) as compared to other *puruṣas*.

Patanjali's Definition of 'Yoga' Explained

Patañjali defines 'yoga' as restraining the mind-stuff (*citta*) from taking various forms (*vṛttis*). 'Citta is the stuff of consciousness formed of the three *guṇas, sattva, rajas* and *tamas* with an absolute preponderance of the first'.[18] Vyāsa mentions three tendencies of *citta, viz., prakhyā* (light), *pravṛtti* (motion) and *sthiti* (immobility); and according to him the connection of *citta* with *sattva, rajas* or *tamas* determines the activities of man e.g., *citta* when predominated by *sattva* becomes enlightened (*prakhyārūpa*); when it is associated with *rajas* and *tamas* will have a desire for fame and name.[19] *Citta,* being ever-changing, continually transforms itself into its diverse states. The three *guṇas* are the substratum of *citta,* and as they are plastic and translucent, can reflect the objective world or transform themselves into its exact copies. Dasgupta holds that our whole body is pervaded by consciousness and, therefore, if any part is affected, it will produce some sort of thinking or feeling or activity.[20]

Citta is the *pariṇāma* of *prakṛti* which is due to the predominance of *sattva* over *rajas* and *tamas.* It is the most subtle evolved form of *prakṛti. Citta* with the functions of desire and fancy will be called *manas*; with determination and resolution, *buddhi*; with the ego-idea, *ahaṁkāra* and with only memory and past *saṁskāras* the *citta.* (It is the form of *citta* in the *samprajñāta samādhi*). In Vedānta, *citta, manas, buddhi and ahaṁkāra* together are called *antaḥkaraṇa.* Radhakrishnan takes c in a comprehensive sense to include intell self-consciousness and *manas.*[21]

However, to our thinking *manas, bud* and *ahaṁkāra* are the functions (*vṛttis*) a not the parts of *citta.* All the three may di appear as they do in *samprajñāta samādi* and still *citta* in *vivekakhayāti* may be ther Vacaspatimiśra in his *Tattavavaiśāradī* us *citta* as a partial expression of the inner orga (*antaḥkaraṇa*), the thinking substance. Vijñānabhikṣu with the help of the Sāṁkhy Sūtra V-107 (*Bhāgaguṇābhyāṁ tattvāntara vṛttiḥ*) argues that *vṛtti* is different both fro being a part and an attribute of *citta. Vṛtti* are like the sparks thrown out by fire (*citta*) but sparks are not a part of that fire; an *vṛttis* cannot be an attribute of *citta,* becaus action can belong only to a substance and not to an attribute; but *vṛttis* arise in the process of *citta* going out to establish a relation with the object. *Vṛttis* are the functions of *citta* and neither a part nor an attribute of the same. Therefore, *antaḥkaraṇa* can rightly be said to include *citta, manas, buddhi* and *ahaṁkāra.*[23]

Functions of Cittavrttis

Vṛttis are the modifications of *citta.* They are the various forms taken up by the mind-stuff. *Citta* is characterised by its dynamic nature. It is ever-changing. When it comes in contact with objects, it takes up that form. The various forms of *citta* are the *vṛttis.* Dharmarāja in his Vedānta Paribhāṣā explains *vṛtti* thus :

'Here, just as the water of a tank, going out through a hole and entering fields through channels, comes to have, even like those (fields), a quadrangular or other figure, similarly, the internal organ too which is of the nature of light, going out through the sense of sight etc. and reaching to the locality of contents like pot, is modified in the form of con-

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[18] Dasgupta, S. N., *Yoga Philosophy in relation to other systems of Indian Thought,* p. 260.

[19] Vyasabhashya, I-2.

[20] Dasgupta, S. N., *Yoga Philosophy in relation to other systems of Indian Thought,* p. 260.

[21] *Indian Phliosophy,* Vol. II, p. 245.

[22] Yogasutra I-2 (*Chitta sabdena antahkaranam buddhi upalaksayati*).

tents like pot. This same modification is called a psychosis (*vṛtti*)'.[24]

Thus, *vṛtti* is the consciousness taking different forms (*viṣayacaitanya*). Niśchaldāsa in his *Vṛttiprabhākara* defines it as the effect, of the internal organ and *ajñāna*, which gives the knowledge of the object.[25]

Citta is the reservoir of immense power which may be dissipated in any direction — good or bad — and because of this, one is advised to restrain the *vṛttis*. As we have already said, *citta* has a disposition to vividness (*prakhyā*), to activity (*pravṛtti*), and to inertia (*sthiti*). When the *citta* is commingled with *rajas* and *tamas*, it acquires fondness for supremacy and for objects of the senses; when pervaded with *tamas*, tends towards demerit, non-perception and passion. When *tamas* dwindles away but is faintly pervaded by *rajas*, it tends towards knowledge and passionlessness; and when *rajas* is also removed, it is grounded in itself. At this stage it is the discernment of the difference between the *citta* and the Self.[26]

Thus, *citta* has both the upward and the downward tendencies. The mind which makes a man a noted scoundrel can turn him into a notable saint. The first stage of restraining will be, therefore, not to allow the *citta* to go downward but by practice and renunciation to help it go upward.[27]

(*To be continued*).

[24] Edited by S. S. S. Sastri, p. 13.

[25] p. 1; *Vrtti Ratnavali*, p. 579; *Siddhantabindu*, pp. 96-97.

[26] Woods—*Harvard Oriental Series*, Vol. XVII, p. 8.

[27] Y. S. I-12.

RITUALS

S. S. MURDESHWAR

RITUALS are the physical activities of man directed Godward. They are as old as man. The first man, and he is said to be an African, looked upon the phenomena of nature with the feelings of wonder, terror, mystery, reverence and joy. He instinctively understood that there was a mighty and Supreme Being that must have created this wonderful and awe-inspiring Nature, and if he wanted to be happy, he must propitiate It by offering some prayers for his protection and food etc. This emotional explosion produced some kind of 'noise-with-meaning', perhaps, in imitation of the noises in nature like the roaring of clouds (*da, da, da*) or cries of animals or birds. This 'noise-with-meaning' may be the foundation of the vast and mighty empire of Ritualism. As time rolled on this empire gained in dimensions and a vast literature on rituals sprang up into existence. To regulate, to conduct and to perform these rituals became the function of a separate class of people called the priests who were learned in the art and science of these rituals.

The religious emotion of man needs an outlet to express itself and it is satisfied by the performance of ceremonies, worship etc.

The Vedas fall into two divisions, viz. Karmakānda which deals with rituals and Jñānakānda dealing with spiritual knowledge.

During the Vedic period the number of these priests necessary for a sacrifice became as high as 22 and they opened schools to train pupils in their specialized branches of sacrifices. Worship, sacrifices, *upāsanas*, *dīksha*, *puras-charanas*, *vratas* and other forms of worship became the honoured citizens of the empire of Ritualism.

Religious life starts with rituals and ceremonies which are said to be the 'Kindergarten of Spiritual Life'. Religions without rituals stagnate and decay.

Rituals, mythology and philosophy are the three facets of religion. Rituals if performed,

under the guidance of trained and *sātvic* priests, with devotion and faith lead to the purification of the mind, so essential for an aspirant. Mythology and lives of great saints serve as spiritual tonics to his spiritual body. Philosophy clothes religion with Divinity and declares the aim of man's life to be Self-realization. No one of these alone can lead an aspirant God-ward. But cumulatively they do. It is like a seed which consists of skin or rind, husk and grain. The seed without anyone of these three cannot sprout. All the three contribute to its growth.

'The institution of sacrifice is very ancient and found favour with both the branches of Asiatic and European Aryans. This was the main ritual of these people. The priests regulated and conducted them. The *Taittiriya Saṁhita* is the oldest and the most authoritative work on the sacrificial ceremonies,' says Bal Gangadhar Tilak in his *Arctic Home of the Vedas*.

Again he observes, 'Atharvan and Angiras must have been the ancient sacrificers of the whole Aryan race and not merely of the Vedic people. Therefore, even though Manu, Atharvan and Angiras be not the names of particular individuals, still there can be little doubt that they represented families of priests who conducted, if not originated, the sacrifices in primeval times.'

The Vedic times witnessed many kinds of sacrifices performed to propitiate the Vedic Gods, like Indra, Varuna, Agni and others. Agni is the most important deity in the Vedas, because he carries the oblations offered to the gods.

During the Vedic times the sacrifices were spread over a week, a fortnight, a month or even a year. There were sacrificial seasons when a chain of sacrifices known as *sattras*, was performed. These *sattras* lasted for ten months. The model annual *sattra* (*Gavamayanam*) consists of 14 sections and lasts for 360 days. 'The Atiratra is an ancient sacrifice performed during the night and for the purpose of helping Indra or the deity that fought with the powers of darkness and that such sacrificial acts as putting on the girdle (Kasti) or squeezing Soma, were performed during this period of darkness (months of darkness at the Arctic region, the home of the Aryans).' [1]

Dr A. C. Bose offers a philosophical explanation to these Vedic sacrifices. 'The Vedic ritual is in keeping with its Advaitic character. Unlike the polytheistic or fetishistic ideal, it is one uniform ceremonial, as a rule, without any special applicability to the deity worshipped. Whatever the deity, the ritual is the same. The same is the oblation or libation offered, though in the accompanying prayer one or many gods may be mentioned.' [2]

The Upaniṣads recommend the performance of sacrifices etc. for the purification of the mind. The *Īśa*, the oldest one, does so but exhorts that they should be performed without any desire for fruit. The *Muṇḍaka* praises rituals but later on condemns them when they are performed with a purpose in mind. In this 'battle of ritualism' the *Bhagavad Gītā* has emerged with brilliant victory because it advocates the performance of rituals without any attachment. The verse 18.5 of the Gita declares emphatically that Yajna, Dāna, and Tapas must be performed in a spirit of surrender to God for the purification of the mind.

The verses 10-15 of the third chapter of the Bhagavad Gita are clearly in defence of rituals. Shridhar Swami generally equates Yajna with sacrificial rites. He observes in his Subodhini that the Lord has set the 'World Cycle' in motion. 'Though the work done with desire is out of place in this context, yet as it is meant to show that in general, work with desire (even) is better than inaction, it is not objectionable.' [3] The great Jñaneshwar says that Seva (Worship) is the thresh-hold (Kuruta) of the temple of knowledge. He further observes that the *nitya* and other

[1] *The Arctic Home of the Vedas*, by Bal Gangadhar Tilak.

[2] *Call of the Vedas*, p. 32.

actions prescribed for the Ashramas should be performed in a spirit of surrender.

The offering of a seat on a pedestal, of water (arghya), of bath in water or panchamrita, of food, of waving of lights, of flowers and of leaves (Patri), of sacred thread, clothes, ornaments and music are the rituals observed for the worship of a Personal God (Iṣṭa-devatā) through the image. Manasic Puja is also offered to the Supreme Being by the advanced aspirants in spirituality, instead of Bahya Puja as mentioned above. The most simple puja according to the *Bhagavad Gītā* is to offer Patra (leaf), Pushpa (flower), Phalam (fruit), Toyam (water) to the Supreme Being.

'All the rites and ceremonies have their root in symbolism. They denote the personification of a man's faith in the Supreme Being . . . . They show to the eye what the mind believes.'[4]

Every ritual has an esoteric or mystical meaning. It encourages man to lead a righteous life, desired of a spiritual apprentice. The mystical aspect of rituals is very important. 'The central part of every true religion is a profound mystical experience in which the soul feels the nearness of God. And one of the functions of ritualism is to suggest this experience and create an atmosphere in which the soul *is predisposed* to it. This is done by *means of various ritualistic acts, the symbolism of which we dimly comprehend by means of sacred formulas in an ancient archaic language, the meaning of which we only half perceive, but the utterance of which thrills the heart with a vague suggestion, and by means of consecrated things such as images, rosaries, vessels and lamps which with their thousand associations with the religious mood take away the mind from what is worldly, familiar and vulgar. Here we have the subtlest of the functions of ritualism and the secret of its great influence.*'[5]

The Shakta *Upaniṣads* contain descriptions of Mudras and Chakras which are used in the rituals performed to propitiate Shakti. These rituals are described in great detail in the Tantra literature. The main object of these rituals is to sublimate the lower passions of the aspirant to achieve his spiritual aim.

In their hygienic aspect, the rituals have a great significance. Every devotee, before he begins his religious ceremonial, must take a bath and wear clean clothes. Rules for his food, speech, sleep and association are laid down by the *Dharmashastras* of Āpastamba, Bauddhayana, Gautama and others. Pradakshinas (going round) of the Ashwatha tree or temples, Suryanamaskaras, *asanas, pranayama,* going on foot on a pilgrimage and fasts conduce to keep the body healthy. To neglect the health of the body is a great sin. One Sanskrit saying says that it is through the body that a man can attain liberation. Hence the devotee should keep the body healthy. A great saint says that a spiritual aspirant should possess 'Pashupati balam' (Sātvic strength) and not 'Pashu-balam' (Tāmasic). To maintain this health Yogic exercises are prescribed.

According to the Yoga-sutras of Patanjali (1.30) an aspirant has to face eight enemies viz. disease, laziness etc. Yoga practices help him to overcome them and to attain Jñāna ultimately. (Ibid II.28)

Prayers for health and strength are scattered over the Vedas e.g. Shukla Yajurveda XIX. 9. The *Muṇḍakopaniṣad* emphatically declares that the knowledge of the Self cannot be obtained by the weak.

The philosophical, psychological and hygienic aspects of rituals have been dealt with above. Now their aesthetic aspect will be considered. Temples, Chakras, music, dance and paintings and sculpture are pressed into service for the spiritual awakening of the devotee. Lord Shiva in His Nataraja Avatar is the presiding Deity of fine arts and science. All art and science in India have a sound background of religion. Critics of art like Dr. Coomaraswami, Havell, Ferguson, Smith and others looked upon the art of

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[4] Prof. D. S. Sharma.

[5] What is Hinduism? by Prof. D. S. Sharma, p. [illegible]

ancient India with wonder, awe and reverence. They bowed down in homage to the majestic, beautiful and gorgeous temples, which appealed to the aesthetic sense of a devotee and inspired him in his spiritual pilgrimage. Gandhiji says 'Our temples are not meant for show but for expression of humanity and simplicity which are typical of a devotional mood. We have to approach these temples in a humble and penitent mood. They are so many houses of God.'

Will Durant says, 'The Hindu temples were built to give not merely a form to beauty, but a stimulus to piety and a pedestal to faith'.

Śri Śankaracharya says that after self-realization rituals are not necessary, but the other Ashramites must observe them according to the injunctions of the Shastras.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

THE article 'How to Become Spiritually Awakened' by Srimat Swami Yatiswaranandaji Maharaj, Vice-President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission has been adopted from a talk given by him at Sri Ramakrishna Math, Begumpet, Hyderabad on the 13th October, 1963. The talk was tape-recorded by Sri C. S. Subba Rao, M.A., M.Ed., of the Osmania University, now Senior Research Officer under the National Council of Educational Research and Training, Delhi. We are thankful to him also for having recorded and transcribed the talk and thus made it available to us.

Dr. P. Nagaraja Rao, M.A., D.Litt., is Professor of Philosophy, Sri Venkateswara University College, Tirupati.

Mr. Susanta De Alwis, LL.B. (Ceylon), B.Litt. (Oxon), Barrister-at-Law (Gray's Inn), is the Assistant High Commissioner for Ceylon, Madras. His article 'The Life and Teachings of the Buddha' is adopted from a talk given by him on the occasion of the Buddha Jayanti Celebrations on the 22nd May, 1965, at the Ramakrishna Math, Madras.

The article 'What Happens When Realization Comes' is a class talk by Swami Gnaneswarananda on *Vivekacūḍamani* delivered at the Vedanta Society, Chicago on the 1st October, 1936.

'Raja Yoga — Restated' by Sri Braj Bihari Nigam, Head of the Department of Philosophy, Government Arts and Commerce College, Indore, is the second instalment of the series.

Sri S. S. Murdeshwar, B.A.,L.T., is a retired Headmaster of Anjuman Islam High School, Bombay.

A REALISTIC APPROACH

THE delayed rains this year in the West Coast and the catchment area of the Cauvery has been worrying Madras cultivators. The *kuruvai* crop which needed transplantation was without sufficient water. To quote a newspaper report, 'the nurseries are already ageing and cannot wait any longer for transplantation'.* It is heartening to see that the situation was realized and taken immediate notice of by the Government of Madras and that it made a swift move through a special representative to contact the Government of Mysore to help the cultivators to tide over the difficulty.

It is reported that as a result of the talks, the Government of Mysore has agreed to release 5,000 million cubic feet over and above the normal quota of water from the Krishnarajasagar reservoir to Mettur to meet the situation, with immediate effect. It is possi-

* Report from Thanjavur dated 20th July, 1965 in The Hindu dated 21st July, 1965.

today if a realistic approach like the present one is made and dealt with speedily.

Here, we may note that sometimes the Cauvery waters are let off in large quantities from the Krishnarajasagar when it reaches a certain height and when the inflow is very strong. Most of this water cannot be utilized lower down i.e. at Mettur also and so it flows into the sea without benefiting anyone. By a judicious arrangement, however, if the flow into the Mettur reservoir is enhanced during the lean period i.e. between June and July, we think the possibilities of floods and draughts may be avoided to a considerable extent. We hope experts from both the Governments will think over the matter and make some permanent arrangements.

22-7-1965.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

SOUVENIR OF SHRI RAMAKRISHNA MELA—1965: Pub.: Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Narendrapur, 24-Parganas, West Bengal.

This exquisitely produced Souvenir gives an idea, in brief, of the activities of the Centre as also the purpose with which the annual Mela is held.

In this Souvenir there are articles by Eastern and Western scholars about the Ramakrishna Movement, and the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda and about religion, science and technology. It contains articles in Bengali and Hindi also. It is profusely illustrated and is printed on good paper.

THOUGHTS OF A SHAKTA: By M. P. Pandit. Pp. 45. Rs. 2.00. Ganesh & Co. Private Ltd., Madras-17.

This is a choice selection from the sayings of a reputed Tantra-Sadhaka on several topics like 'Shakti', 'Jnana', 'Japa', 'Upasana' and 'Chikitsa'. Pithily expressed, each one of them affords food for thought, deliberation and experience.

S. RAJAGOPALAN.

THE LONELY PILGRIM: By Manubahen Gandhi. Pp. 273. Price Rs. 3.00. Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad-14.

This book, designed as a day to day record of the Mahatma's perilous journeys in the Noakali region, is yet a most outstanding contribution towards understanding Gandhiji's mission and philosophy, and his ideas and ideals. The author had been his most devoted amanuensis in those difficult and dangerous days, and it was her special good fortune to experience how Gandhiji had acted and reacted to the various problems of life and existence. She rightly feels that it is 'beyond the power of language to give a true picture of the exalted state of his mind, and the wonderful work he was doing', notwithstanding the stupendous difficulties all through. The Gita has been his sustaining force at all times. His own commentary on some of the verses, at page 38 and 163, shows how he had himself practised in his own life the doctrines set out therein. He laid down as pre-requisites for his followers 'truth, purity, total absence of affectation and hypocrisy, with the Inner Voice and behaviour, strained through the sieve of discrimination and total indifference as to whether it would please or offend others' (198). His faith in Ramnam was unshakable and he could conceive of no other remedy on earth (158); but he took pains to emphasise that the votary should keep to the laws of morality (158). He was not for blind faith but he pleaded for its saturation 'with knowledge and wisdom' (106). He scouted the idea of self-immolation; his own view was that one's body belongs to God and that it has to be looked after and served faithfully and well. His concept of an ideal marriage is set out at pages 90 and 91. He laid stress not only on ethical ideals, which were for the most part abstract, but took care to stress on the cultivation of good manners (56) and sartorial refinement (46).

The book sets out in detail the privations and pains Mahatmaji had had to undergo in what 'was a glorious march undertaken by one of the greatest men in history' (76).

This is a most welcome addition to Gandhian literature and philosophy.

S. RAJAGOPALAN.

HINDI

BHAVANJALI AND DEEPANJALI: By Indira Devi. Publishers: Hari Krishna Mandir, Poona-16. Pp. 204. Price Rs. 4.00.

Indira Devi, we understand, has received more than 800 lilting Bhajans from a supernormal plane of inspiration. They purport to come from Mirabai of the royal house of Mewar who passed into history centuries ago as an unsurpassed devotee of Sri Krishna. All these Bhajans have the same theme though there is variation in the manner and the terminology of the songs. A number of selections have already appeared during the last few years and this one is the latest instalment. The hymns have a striking devotional quality and promise to be popular.

M. P. PANDIT.

SANGITA MALA: Pub.: Ramakrishna Mission Vidyapith, Vaidyanath—Deoghar, Bihar. Pp. 56. Price Re. 1.

This is a collection of songs (Bengali and

the Ramakrishna Order. In it are contained songs composed by Swami Vivekananda, Girish Chandra Ghosh, Tulsidas etc. It contains also some songs of Ramaprasad and Kamalakanta which Sri Ramakrishna used to sing.

BOOKS RECEIVED

BONDAGE AND FREEDOM AND OTHER TALKS: By Chitrabhanu. Pub. Jaico Publishing House, 125, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Bombay-1. Pp. 51. Rs. 1.50.

LETTERS THAT BRING MONEY AND EXPAND BUSINESS: By Lillian Eichler Watson. Pub. Jaico Publishing House. Pp. 218. Rs. 2.50.

MADAME AMBASSADOR: By Anne Guthrie. Pub. Jaico Publishing House. Pp. 184. Rs. 3.00.

LAND OF THE FIVE RIVERS: Edited by Khushwant Sing and Jaya Thadani. Pub.: Jaico Publishing House. Pp. 181. Rs. 2.50.

INDIA OUR FIRST LOVE: By Sadhu Ittyavirah, Kadanad P.O., Via Anthinad, Kottayam Dt., Kerala. Pp. 18. Price 25 P.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA BHAGAVATAM: (Malayalam) By Swami Vishadananda. Pub. S. K. Parameswara Pillai, Trivandrum. p. 274. Price Rs. 3.

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE VEDANTA SOCIETY OF ST. LOUIS MISSOURI, U.S.A.

Short Report on the Activities

(April, 1964, through March, 1965)

Sunday Services: Swami Satprakashananda, who is in charge of the Vedanta Society, conducted regular services in the Society's chapel on Sunday mornings except during eight weeks of the hot season. He dealt with different religious and philosophical topics. The services were open to the public. Students of comparative religions of different colleges, churches, and synagogues were among the audience.

Meditation and Discourse: Every Tuesday evening the Swami conducted a meditation class and gave a discourse on 'The Bhagavad-Gita'. Students and members of different religious and educational centres also attended the meetings.

Throughout the year the chapel was open for silent meditation on all weekdays from 11 to 12 noon. Every day some devotees came.

During the summer recess, while the regular services were suspended, the Vedanta students met regularly every Sunday morning and Tuesday evening at the usual time for prayer, meditation, and for hearing the Swami's tape-recorded lectures.

Anniversaries: The birthdays of Sri Krishna, The Buddha, Sri Sankaracharya, Sri Ramakrishna, The Holy Mother, Swami Vivekananda, and Swami Brahmananda were observed with devotional worship in the shrine. On the following Sunday a special service was conducted in the chapel to celebrate the occasion. On Sri Ramakrishna's birth anniversary a Hindu dinner was served. On every other occasion the audience partook of light prasad. On Swami Vivekananda's birth anniversary documentary sound films on his life and message prepared by the Government of India were also shown. Besides, other festivals such as Good Friday, the worship of the Divine Mother Durga, and Christmas Eve were observed with special service in the chapel.

Other Meetings at the Society: Two additional meetings were held in the Society's chapel: One for the Adult Education Group of St. Peter's Episcopal Church and the other for the High School - students belonging to the Richmond Heights Presbyterian Church. On both occasions the Swami answered a number of questions after the talk.

Lecture Engagements: The Swami was invited to speak on Hindu religion and philosophy at different educational and religious institutions in and outside St. Louis., viz., Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota; the Missouri Methodist Church, Columbia, Missouri; Concordia Theological Seminary, St. Louis, and the Temple Shaare Emeth, St. Louis. On every occasion there was a discussion after the talk. The Swami answered questions. At Concordia he spoke a number of times.

Other Activities: The Society's library was well utilized by its members and friends.

About forty guests and visitors from different places came at different times. They usually talked with the Swami and attended the services.

The Swami gave interviews to the seekers of spiritual instruction and to those who came for the solution of their personal problems.

The Founding of the Vedanta Society of Kansas City, Missouri: The Vedanta Society of Kansas City, Missouri, was founded under the auspices of the Vedanta Society of St. Louis, to which one of its devoted members, Mrs. Anne W. Fawcett of Kansas City, Missouri, had bequeathed a house for the purpose.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA, KANPUR

Report for 1964-65

The activities of the Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Kanpur fall under three heads: Spiritual and Cultural, Educational, and Medical. Besides regular worship, prayer and meditation, religious classes were held on Sunday evenings in the Mission premises and in the other

Relief: The Ashrama collected and sent Rs. 19,270.33, some dhoties and sarees and other daily necessities of life to the different relief centres started by the Mission for the East Pakistan Migrants Relief during the year.

Educational: Besides an effective scheme of imparting thorough general education within the framework of the prescribed syllabus, the School has been making an earnest endeavour to provide a scope and atmosphere conducive to an integrated growth of the personality of students. Especially moral education reinforced by a close vigilance over students' conduct is a strong point of the institution.

The Higher Secondary School run by the Ashrama had 652 boys on its role during the period. The School library had 5,715 volumes and 5,609 books were issued to the staff and students. This year educational guidance was given to 148 students of class VIII and vocational guidance to 88 students of class X. The School has also provided increased facilities in the teaching of Science.

Medical: The Charitable Hospital run by the Ashrama has five departments: General Diseases, Opthalmology, Pathology, Dentistry and Radiology. The total number of patients treated during the year was 1,90,315. 540 operations were performed and 21,319 injections were given. The Laboratory examined 368 specimens. 288 patients were treated with Electro-Therapy. 269 operations were done in the Opthalmic Department. 177 patients were examined under X-ray.

While expressing their gratefulness to their friends and sympathisers for the help rendered, the management appeals for funds for the completion of a library building, to build a science laboratory for the school and to meet the large deficit of Rs. 11,273.97 (incurred during the year).

SRI RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA, MYSORE-2

SUMMER RETREAT FROM 1–5–'65 TO 17–5–'65

SHORT REPORT

The Ramakrishna Ashrama, Mysore held a Summer Retreat for two weeks for High School and College boys at Sri Ramakrishna Vidyashala, Mysore, in order to give an opportunity for the earnest seekers to come in closer touch with the monks of the Order and getting acquainted with the literature and ideals of Swami Vivekananda and Sri Ramakrishna. The aim of the Retreat was as follows: (1) To make young men study themselves through questioning and reflection and enable them to find their own way of development. (2) To supplement their school and college education by an understanding of the fundamental spiritual principles that have formed the basis of Indian culture. (3) To impart a knowledge of our basic scriptures. (4) To develop among them a respect for all religions. (5) To teach some practical disciplines that may be followed up afterwards as a daily practice.

As many as 175 applications were received from candidates intending to join the retreat but only 62 could be selected. The entire course was free except that a concessional boarding charge of Rs. 50/- and Rs. 25/- was collected from a few well-to-do and middle class candidates. Their number was 16 and 10 respectively. 36 were fully free.

The candidates had a busy routine all the days. Chanting of the Vedas and Gita was taught to the boys. There were congregational prayers morning and evening. Three classes each lasting an hour were held daily by the monks of the Ramakrishna Order on one or the other of the following subjects: the Gita, Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna, Teachings of Swami Vivekananda, the Ramayana, Mahabharatha, the Upanishads, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam, etc.

Nutritious food was supplied. Outdoor games were compulsory for all. Short excursions were arranged. The candidates were taught to live a life of healthy discipline. The whole course of study was in Kannada as the candidates were all from the Mysore State. The Retreat was a great success inasmuch as the candidates who participated had perceptibly increased their eagerness and respect for the spiritual ideals. Most of the boys have expressed their eagerness for Retreats for longer duration and of greater frequency.

The management acknowledges the donations received from the different individuals and institutions for the expenses of the Retreat and thanks them all.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, MANGALORE

REPORT FOR 1964-65

The Ramakrishna Mission, Mangalore maintains a Boys' Home for poor and meritorious students. It also runs a Charitable Dispensary. The number of boarders studying in the different institutions at the end of the year was: Higher Elementary School 12, High School 25, College 4. Of these 34 were free, 2 concession-holders and 5 paying. In the Balakshrama an attempt is made to impart integral education through the inculcation of spiritual values in their widest sense. They participate in the daily routine of the Ashrama such as the morning and evening congregational prayers.

The Charitable Dispensary treated 31,571 patients in 1964-65 of which 6,800 were new cases. The Laboratory examined 636 specimens, 1,445 injections were given, and 42 dental extractions were done.

The management expresses their gratitude to all contributors for their generous help towards the maintenance of the institution, and appeals for funds for the maintenance of poor students, completion of the Swami Vivekananda Centenary Memorial, and for the maintenance of the Dispensary.

Editors: Swami Kailasananda and Swami Paratparananda


The
॥ नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यः ॥
VEDANTA
RI
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1959
Sri Rama Krishna
Shivala Mandir

श्रीमच्छंकरभगवत्पादविरचिता

सौन्दर्यलहरि

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SAUNDARYA-LAHARI

OF SRI SANKARACHARYA

WITH COMMENTARIES:

SAUBHAGYAVARDHANI OF KAIVALYASRAMA
LAKSHMIDHARA OF LAKSHMIDHARACHARYA.
ARUNAMODINI OF KAMESVARASURIN

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AND NOTES:

By PANDIT R. ANANTHAKRISHNA SASTRI &
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.... Be bold and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease.
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XLVI **NOVEMBER 1959** **No. 7**

HOW EVEN THE GREAT ONES SURRENDER

Pandit Narayan Sastri was known as a great scholar in the country even before he came to Bengal to study Nyaya. Living with his teachers like the orthodox Brahmacharins of ancient days, he had studied the various Sastras continuously for twenty-five years to acquire equal knowledge of and mastery over all the six systems of philosophy. But Narayan Sastri was not like ordinary pandits. He clearly understood that no one could have a real mastery of them by a mere study without sadhana.

At this auspicious moment of his life he met Sri Ramakrishna and felt immediately drawn towards him in a mysterious way. The more intimately he mixed with the Master, the more did love for him grow in his heart and a desire to know him deeper and deeper. Sri Sastri knew from his studies that while ascending to higher and higher mental planes, there came wonderful experiences and visions, followed at last by Nirvikalpa *samadhi*. Seeing that Sri Ramakrishna had that immediate knowledge of which he himself had merely read, Sastriji thought, 'Ah! how wonderful! Where else shall I have such a God-man to teach me the hidden meanings of the Sastras?' Living with him like a disciple in true humility and listening attentively to his nectar-like words, detachment and eagerness to know Truth grew in Sastriji day by day.

There came a day when Narayan Sastri, meeting Sri Ramakrishna in a secluded place, took the opportunity and insisted tenaciously on being initiated in sannyasa. Sri Ramakrishna agreed on account of his eagerness and initiated him on an auspicious day. No sooner had he been initiated, than Sri Sastri expressed to the Master the desire of his heart to make strenuous effort to realize Brahman at Vasishthasrama till his aim was fulfilled. Dissolved in tears, he asked for Sri Ramakrishna's blessings, worshipped his feet and left Dakshineswar. Thereafter no certain news was received anymore of Narayan Sastri.

LIFE AND RELIGION

How far does religion influence our life ? Often is this question asked. With the increase of secularistic ideas, religion is on the defensive. It is of course natural that an older idea is attacked by a newer one and it must support its standpoint. Secularistic people are mainly of two types: egotistical and socialistic. The first group is satisfied with following the individual likes and dislikes, personal enjoyment and happiness. They do not care what happens to the other man. They however are denounced by the religious as well as the socialistic people. The second group thinks more in terms of society. They are not particular about their individual quality of life. But they are interested in social growth. This growth however must be tangible and material only. It is this group that actually can question the usefulness of religious pursuits, though while attacking the utility of religion or its metaphysical basis, it makes common cause with the first group.

Generally, the egotistic, individualistic or selfish secular people are not taken into consideration. They are self-condemned. But the vast majority of the secularists belong to this class. They want to be free from all restraints, all considerations for higher ideals or other people. But society cannot progress with such people. So they are to be trained in the tenets of citizenship and a police force also will have to be kept ready for the incorrigibles. This type of selfish nature will be seen among the followers of religion too. And often people ask : What then is the use of religion ? What effect has it on life of the common people ? As for the secularistic selfish people as a normal thing that man will be selfish. The theories of socialistic outlook, as well as secularism and materialism are not asked to explain why people are so. For have they not accepted man as an animal or almost a material thing ? So there ends their responsibility. If religion speaks of higher values and higher virtues, it must show these virtues manifest in the society. That is the line of argument. If you say non-violence is the ideal, you will be shown immediately half a dozen failures of this principle. If you point out that violence is also untenable as a guide, it becomes only a negative answer !

What then is the balanced view ? The point is to be thrust home that the more plausible theory is the correct theory, at least for the present, as we accept in the case of scientific truths. Religion as a theory and a way of life will be true and covetable, if compared to other theories and other ways of life, it can solve the problems of life better, and can influence life more deeply.

Following this line of argument, we can easily see that wherever religion fails to influence life, it is not so much its fault as of the 'normal' nature of man as described by the secularists themselves. Looked at from this angle, religion is freed from many of their charges. But still some substance remains in the argument that religion is not so useful unless it brings about a change in the 'normal' life of man. Religious virtues must be manifested in their life. That is also the behest of all religious teachers. 'Religion is realization', said Swami Vivekananda. Unless religious virtues are practicalized in the life of the votaries, they remain mere theo-

theories they may stand on equal grounds with other theories, but to be a thing intimately related to life practice and experience are essential.

It is of course recognized that men with a religious outlook develop the qualities of honesty and dutifulness, qualities that are essential for running the administration as well as the day-to-day affairs. Interpersonal relations require much patience, consideration and love. These qualities are generally imbibed by such people. Wherever there is a lack of these qualities, we must admit that religion has not penetrated the surface life. There may be still some necessity for it, but the social benefit is little. And people who judge any institution or outlook only from the standpoint of utility will naturally be dissatisfied.

India is often said to be the land of religion. Then why is it that so much of corruption and other evils are seen in this country, is the question often asked. It is a pertinent question too. In the pristine days of India when religion was a reality in the life of the people, a very high standard of higher virtues was visible in the society. This becomes clear when we study accounts of Indian society left by Megasthenes and others. We cannot say we maintain the same level even now. After the Independence the sacrificing quality seems to be still more lessened. The horizontal aspect of religion is surely less, though we still have the vertical one in the lives of rare individuals. If religion is less in the society, it is because we lack the conviction of the ancients. This may be because of the ideological conflict, conflict between materialism and spirituality, and the modern emphasis on enjoyment at any cost here and now. It is materialism that fixes man's attention on this life and on pleasure and as a result boosts up self-aggrandizement and to banish religion, or declaring oneself to be non-religious but to try to be genuinely religious. By too much criticism more people will be scared to be called religious, thereby the standard of selflessness will go still more down. Already the rituals of religious life are being given up, criticism will push them out completely. But then religion will lose its power of growth, if completely dissociated from the externals, like rice removed of the husk. For a full growth both are necessary. Let us not banish religion and along with that the basis of unselfishness and higher virtues through our unkind criticism.

Moreover, it is the socalled externals on which depend the peculiarities of a culture. It is often said that a new world order is coming. As a result of the growth of communication and mutual contact between nations, habits, dresses etc. will be standardized and local peculiarities will be obliterated. What then will remain of the culture of a particular country ? No nation we think will give way easily. In India we are not very particular about retaining our national characteristics but dresses etc. of other newly freed nations of Burma, Ghana and the like, will show how sensitive they are. Externals are the avenues through which culture expresses itself. Standardization is a great problem that the Unesco is facing and hence sufficient safeguard has been provided for the preservation of the national culture. Sri Baldoon Dhingra has recorded this problem in his *diary* in the *Aryan Path* (Oct. 1959). Mr. Dhingra questions Mr. Richard Cowell :

> Is there a trend towards uniformity in cultural development today ?
>
> R.C. : What I have so briefly and inadequately said about the power of tradition shows, I think, that there have always been strong forces making for uniformity within

and still active. The fear now is, of course, that these local, national and regional patterns may be ironed out into something much more uniform. It is fear which exists not only on the international level but on the national level also. In the relatively tiny British Isles there has been, over the past centuries, a very considerable variety in cultural life, which has been reflected in speech, dress, food and often in personal relations. Now we have a national radio and television, a national daily, periodical and magazine press, nationally provided educational and social-welfare services—all of which seem to threaten this variety.

Other forces at work on the national and international fronts also seem to threaten this variety. Political ideologies even when directed by worthy people to worthy ends, which have the effect of favouring the great mass of the people, can be culturally dangerous in this sense because the mass is always liable to be mainly composed of mediocrities. Perhaps it is the latent fear of just such a threatened cultural levelling-down process that has inspired a greater aversion to Socialism and particularly to Marxian Communism (and inspired an aversion to democracy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries) than the distrust all these great movements aroused on purely political and economic grounds.

B.D. : Will the new internationalism of the United Nations lead to cultural uniformity ?

R.C. : Fears of a different order arise from the growing influence of the United Nations and of its Specialized Agencies, particularly Unesco. Will they not, it is asked, become a menace to culture because they seek to diminish differences between the various nations of the earth ? It was obviously with this fear in mind that those who wrote the Constitution of Unesco called special attention to the need to preserve what they happily called 'the fruitful diversity of cultures' in the Member States of the Organization.

Where that diversity is indeed fruitful, we should all agree that it should be preserved. But we all know also that there have been cultural practices, some hallowed by long observance from primitive times, that none of us would wish to preserve ; human sacrifices and ritual murders, for example. The United Nations, by developing something in the nature of a collective conscience of mankind, may, and indeed must, exert *some* influence in the direction of cultural uniformity. As long as it involves a genuine levelling *up* of cultural life, and not a levelling *down* as Socialism and Marxian Communism inevitably tend to do (whatever their merits on economic grounds are supposed to be), there should be no cause for alarm.

With our too much anxiety for the results we forget that the means are also equally important. To get the kernel of the fruit the skin is also necessary. So devotion to externals, to dresses, habits, language and rituals, is essential. It takes generations for an idea to take root in a society and often it is mixed up with much of non-essentials. In common man you cannot expect an idea materialized in all its pristine glory. In the so called enlightened, to whom everything has been relativized, you cannot often get an idea suffusing his life, for he loses the capacity of taking anything as an article of faith.

Improvement of habits, manners and customs, if improvement at all you call it, must be done not by lowering the standard but by pointing out the higher ideal, the better method, and stressing on the essential. Then the transition will be less painful and more smooth. And in the process the fundamental, useful moorings will not be lost. It is because of this Swami Vivekananda repeatedly warned that while educating the backward the religious outlook

constructive can be implanted in the society in one generation. He said:

We have to give them secular education. We have to follow the plan laid down by our ancestors, that is, to bring all the ideals slowly down among the masses. Raise them slowly up, raise them to equality. Impart even secular knowledge through religion.

The fate of a nation does not depend upon the number of husbands their widows get, but upon the condition of the masses. Can you raise them? Can you give them back their lost individuality without making them lose their innate spiritual nature? Can you become an Occidental of occidentals in your spirit of equality, freedom, working energy, and at the same time a Hindu to the very backbone in religious culture and instincts? This is to be done and we will do it.

When we plead for retaining or going slow in changing the age-old customs and habits, we do not say that these externals are inviolables. They can be changed and they are changed. That was how the new Smritis giving new rules of conduct were promulgated. In this age of easy communication and huddling of men in industrial areas, much of the old habits will have to be changed. But let us not lose the higher moorings imbedded in them but adjust them to the new surroundings, by new interpretations and by evolving new habits. Otherwise the vacuum will be filled up by things that degrade men and society.

AT THE HOLY FEET OF M.

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

SWAMI DHARMESHANANDA

Monday, September 14, 1931.

Place — 50 *Amherst Street, on the roof of the four-storied school building.*

I brought a portrait of the Master from Chinta Haran Maharaj of Advaita Ashrama and visited M. in the evening.

He was seated on a chair facing north. He welcomed me and asked me to sit beside him. I was going to keep the portrait on the bench when M. expressed a desire to have a look at it.

M.: Let me see it; is it the Master's photograph or a printed picture?

He took it up and showed it to every one present there and told them that it was very good. 'They have also sent me one from Advaita Ashrama', said he. I said it was a photograph.

A visitor: Was this taken from an original

Myself: Yes, Pramada Das Mitra of Banaras (with whom Swamiji had a running correspondence) had an original photograph from which copies have been made.

Q.: Was this portrait taken from life?

I replied in the affirmative and told him that the portrait of the Master which was now worshipped at Udbodhan in the Holy Mother's room was also original, but was now gradually fading. The photo was good but the printed copy was somewhat rough and lacked that softness which was found in the Master's appearance.

It was evening. Purnendu Babu lighted the lamp and burnt incense as usual. The room was filled with its sweet fragrance.

M.: Look at that picture of Lord Viswanath in deep meditation. Below it stands the picture of the bird hatching eggs with open eyes and with that inward look which the

M. repeated the name of the Lord 'Hari' while offering salutation to all the pictures that were hanging on the wall. He beat the musical drum twice or thrice and then saluted the Tulsi plants from a distance. After making my obeisance I got one asana to sit down upon but M. asked some one present there to bring a better one for me. He inspected it before he gave it to me and said with affection : 'The ground is cold, you can sit here on the bench'.

I told him that the ground was dry. M. agreed and told me that the place was secluded and beautiful. I meditated for some time and then came and sat by him.

Looking to a householder devotee M. said : Worldly life is full of troubles and responsibilities. The daughter is married and lives with her husband's people but even then you are not free from anxiety about her. So it is very difficult to become like King Janaka who had passed before through intense spiritual discipline in deep solitude. And even after you gain supreme wisdom it is difficult to retain it in worldly life. Once in the court of King Janaka came one female hermit. The king did not look at her face but hung down his head. She said : 'Have you still got that idea of distinction between man and woman ?' You see, it was for this reason that the Master wanted us to keep aloof from money and women in the course of our spiritual practices. A spiritual aspirant should live far away from worldly life ; though of course, after Self-realisation, the sense of distinction fades away and he sees God in every created being. But this comes only after complete realisation. This worry on your daughter's account is mentioned in the *Bhagavata*. Prahlad said to his school mates : 'Do not marry, my friends. You have to worry about your daughter even when she goes to her father-in-law's place.'

A gentleman was amazed to hear this and said : 'So much wisdom even at that early age !' To this M. replied : 'Why not ? He was not just an ordinary boy but had the supreme wisdom ingrained in him.'

A young boy (who had brought the asana for me) took the dust of M's feet, and then I felt somewhat embarrassed and prevented him from doing it. But M. said : 'Why do you stop him ? He will be blessed if he does it. But if you say that God resides in every heart, even then I will tell you that He manifests Himself more in the heart of a sadhu. Nobody goes on digging the earth for water when it is available nearby. A sadhu has a twofold duty to perform. Firstly, he will try to get salvation for himself and then encourage others in their spiritual practices. The Master used to say, 'In winter one collects dry wood and others burn them in street corners to warm themselves.' Similarly the sadhu realises God and other people get the benefit of his realisation. Do you know how ennobling the company of sadhus is ? Worldly life is itself a malady for which the remedy is the company of sadhus. You are going for instance, with your friends to sympathise with a bereaved family but while on the road you are in a perfectly hilarious mood ; when you go there and see others weeping, you also start shedding tears. It is just like that.

Well, Sukhlal Babu ! you have spent a good lot of time in the company of sadhus today and now I suppose you can go. There is a lantern-show on the life of Sri Chaitanya, to be given by a devout speaker at Beliaghata today and tomorrow upto 11 p.m. You can go and see it. These things will give you a good inspiration.

In the meantime attorney Biren Babu (son-in-law of Paltu Kar) came with a certain gentleman. In introducing the gentleman to M. Biren Babu said that he was a devout Brahmin who worked in his office and had come to see him. M. received him with folded hands and stopped him when he was going to take the dust of his feet.

M. (to Himangshu) : How often have you seen the exhibition ?

Himangshu replied he would go very soon.

M. : Well, why not go today with Biren Babu ?

Himangshu : But is he going ?

M. : Of course he will go.

Then to the other gentleman he said : 'You

will get inspired if you see exhibitions of the lives of Sri Gauranga, Prahlada and Sri Krishna. Mukunda Babu, what brings you here so unexpectedly?'

Mukunda Babu said that he had come for two days on business connected with the school.

M.: Have you fixed up any programme as to the places you are going to visit?

Mukunda Babu said that he would go to the Math and also to the Holy Mother's residence at Baghbazar.

M.: I will request you to visit another place also. There is a theistic exhibition at Baghbazar. They are spending 30 to 40 thousand rupees over it. They have taken a good deal of trouble to collect all the materials; we have only to go and see it at the expense of only half an anna tram-fare towards the mid-day! Isn't it a great advantage?

Mukunda Babu: Yes, I saw it in the papers and read about a protest meeting also.

M.: But what is the use of protesting? Do men live by bread alone? We have got three bodies in us—the gross, the fine, and the causal. You are required to cater for all of them. You require food for your soul also and this exhibition provides it. Acharya Shankara explained what is meant by food by saying that it includes whatever we take in through our senses. So this is also a kind of food. Anyway the protest meeting will serve the purpose of effecting economy because they will be careful in the matter of expenses. I am told they are somewhat fanatical in regard to religion but I hope they will correct themselves. They are in Baghbazar which is the Master's place. Bigotry and fanaticism will soon be things of the past. You can already sense it.

Biren Babu: Many of them now-a-days respect the Master. Jagabandhu Babu, the big donor of the exhibition, a staunch Vaishnava, when visiting Dakshineswar never entered the temple of Kali. But now-a-days many of them are learning to respect the Master. I told them that the hard labour I have done is only because of the Master's grace. must know that His grandson has done it (being the son-in-law of Paltu Kar, a devotee of the Master).

M.: Many of them (Vaishnavas) have renounced the world. And of course the Master will see that their mistakes are corrected. He comes only to help the sadhus. 'I come down to this world, whenever necessary to protect the sadhus.' (Gita) It is only through the sadhus that He is preserving the true religion and do you think He will not look after them? (Looking to Dhiren he said:) Listen, the Master used to say that hearing is better than reading and seeing is better than hearing.

I was told to go with Biren Babu in his car. He dropped a few of us at Udbodhan where he made his obeisance before the picture of the Holy Mother and of Sarat Maharaj and departed.

Tuesday, Sept. 22, 1931.

I was very eager to see M. to-day and so at about 7-30 a.m. I went to see him. I first went to Thakurbari and listened to Ramanama Kirtan. It was the 11th day of the moon and on this day the devotees sing Ramanama as in the Belur Math. After sometime I came to know from Dhiren that M. had gone to 50 Amherst Street and so I proceeded there. Dhiren accompanied me. It was at my suggestion that he had started going to M. about a year previous to this. He visits him daily and is now very happy. M. helps him like a father and gives him inspiration and advice.

At about 8-30 a.m. I reached there and found M. seated on a chair facing east on the balcony of the four-storied building. In front of him were seated Sukhlal Babu, Mr Guha, Purnendu and some devotees. Dhiren was also there.

M. said to Dhiren: Where are you coming from now? Have you been to that other place?

Dhiren replied that he had just been at the Thakurbari listening to Ramanama Kirtan.

M.: You read the *Kathamrita* (Gospel of

Looking at another devotee he said : 'Dhiren reads it very well.' Then he asked Dhiren to read. Dhiren started reading from the third part of *Kathamrita*. The portion dealt with Narendra Nath's straitened circumstances and the poverty of his people. Dhiren read : 'The Master (who was with Naren and other devotees) said : One has to realise God first and then to realise His manifestation in everything. One has to be firmly fixed in absolute monism and then live in the region of qualified monism.' That is what Sri Ramakrishna used to do.

I wanted to know whether the phenomenal could be accepted after the realisation of the Absolute.

M. said : Whatever the Guru has told us is correct and we have to accept it as such. Guru is God Himself in another form ; and He Himself descends in human form to teach this truth. He becomes Guru in order to provide salvation for mankind. The Master used to tell us to take the whole of the wood-apple (bel), but the Guru will advise you whether you should first seek for the kernel or otherwise. The wood-apple contains the crust, the kernel and the seeds which are here taken to represent the world, the Brahman and the created beings. Do you think realisation *can come* only through hearing? You have by sadhana (*practice*) to see God to attain that blissful state and the proof of that is provided by the fact that you are still not free from doubts about so many things. But hearing is better than reading and seeing is better than hearing. If you see God, then only you are free from all doubts.

Dhiren continued to read : 'There are three kinds of devotees. The lowest in the scale is the one who says pointing to the sky that God lives there. The next higher type says that God resides in every heart. But the best devotee is one who says that God has manifested Himself in so many diverse forms and whatever we see around us is God in one form or another.'

M. said : Yes, we should have this firm faith that He is in everybody, and that residing in every heart He directs everything. This is how the second type of devotee feels. And the devotee on the lowest scale thinks that He is beyond his reach and shows Him as living somewhere beyond the skies. But he is the real devotee who says that God has become everything and there is nothing without Him.

Dhiren continued reading : 'But doubts vanish when we realise God. And when we realise Him, Karma ceases.'

M. : There, you see, you are told how to test the genuineness of a person's claim to have realised God. Freedom from Karma is the one real test of God realisation.

Dhiren went on reading : 'The Master says : "One day while I was worshipping Shiva and putting Vajra (the earthen ball on top) on His head I was shown that this universe is Shiva Himself. And then I stopped worshipping clay images of Shiva. I was plucking flowers one day and woke up to the realisation that all the flower plants are nothing but bouquets of flowers." '

Now Dhiren wanted to know what 'Vajra' was.

M. said : It is an emblem of Shiva ; Vajra is nothing but a ball of mud placed on the 'lingam' during worship. To ardent devotees He appears in the form of this cosmos. And it is further mentioned that God is like the sea, on the waves of which (this is by Karma) all created beings are rising and falling, happiness and misery appearing alternately. All this is very difficult to comprehend. The Master Himself one day began to analyse the mechanism of the world and suddenly said 'There, I have got into a labyrinth ; Oh Mother ! I shall never resort to arguments.' It is therefore, rightly said that Guru (the Preceptor) is the only hope for us. One day somebody came to the Master just at noon and with folded hands asked, 'What is the way to salvation ?' The Master said, 'Faith in the words of the Guru is the only path to realisation.'

(*To be continued.*)

THE RAMAKRISHNA MOVEMENT

P. SANKARANARAYANAN

The Ramakrishna Movement is an aspect renascent Hinduism in the 20th century. It phasises the integral character of Hinduism thout deviating from any of its fundamental ctrines or accepting some features of it only d rejecting the others as the Arya Samaj ovement, for example, did. It is not eclectic any sense of the term trying to accommo-te all doctrines by a sort of an artificial nbination. It is well to remember that Sri makrishna and his illustrious disciple, Swami vekananda never intended to propagate a v religion or a new cult. They re-estab-ned the old Hindu faith in its fullness and h variety both in the understanding of ir disciples and in the allegiance of their rts.

At the time when Sri Ramakrishna appeared, religion of the Hindus was subjected to isms within and to attacks from without. e Arya Samajist cry of ' Back to the Vedas ' s raised to save the religion from the hosti-of the Mussalmans who waged war against idols worshipped by its votaries. The hmo Samaj made compromises with Chris-ity in its zeal to make its religion look res table to the foreigners. The educated youth the day was dazzled by Western civilization l culture and was getting into an attitude derision for everything Indian.

It was in this predicament that Sri Rama-shna came to vindicate the integral unity d the comprehensiveness of the Hindu reli-on. Absolutely unlettered as he was, his s not a theologian's approach to religion. In e transition that he went through from an tra-orthodox caste-bound Pujari to a Pro-et transcending caste by his spiritual emi-ence (and by that only), the truth of the edic dictum that Reality is One, but sages eak of It variously, was brought home with conviction that was born of its experience

devotee and the Deity in his worship of the Divine Mother, he ended with the realisation of the Supreme Absolute in his periods of nirvikalpaka samadhi. In between, the way was paved with the processes of karma, bhakti and jnana each strengthening and being sus-tained by the rest. He saw in his experience that the several paths to Perfection detailed in the scriptures of Hindu religion were all oriented to an identical goal. His *realisation* of the confluence of religions and of religious paths *preceded* his *declaration* of it to his dis-ciples and so, his utterance bore the certificate of certainty. At a time when the followers of each particular creed and sect of the Hindu religion claimed absolute superiority to their doctrines over those of the rest, when new movements were ' balkanising ' it, accepting some of its tenets and rejecting others, some of them making unnatural affiliations with other faiths and when alien religions decried the Hindu faith, alike in its tenets and in its prac-tices, as barbarous and outlandish, it is remark-able that Sri Ramakrishna taught that there are many paths to the same goal, that Religion is one though religions may vary. If unity in variety is the plan of the physical universe, why should it be denied in the realm of the Spirit which is the field for the adventure of religion? As Swami Vivekananda put it :

> The truth may be expressed in a hundred thou-sand ways. The same thing can be viewed from a hundred different standpoints and yet be the same thing.

That all these hundred thousand ways of expression and all the hundred different stand-points are not antagonistic to one another will be realised if one fixes his eye on the Truth and not on the forms of expression or the standpoints. That is the meaning of the dic-tum : Ekam Sat Viprah bahudha vadanti. The Vedic seers, the Upanishadic sages, the

bore witness, each in his particular manner, to the same eternal Truth, and conveyed it in diverse ways suited to the climate of their times and the temper of their people. The earnest votaries of the different religions are pilgrims to the Eternal. Their equipage may differ. They may tread different paths. They may speak different scriptures and they may be led by different Prophets. But, seeing that when once they reach the hill-top, the voice of the Preacher and the noise of the Scripture are hushed in the silence of mystic communion, there is no need, nor is it wise, to wrangle all along the route and waste our spiritual powers in wearisome and futile disputation. This is the great lesson that Sri Ramakrishna vouchsafed to the world, a lesson which, it is well to repeat, was not by any means an academic dogma, but was the mature result of the realisation in his own experience of the unity of all religions. His message had a two-fold significance. First, it reconciled the various sects within the Hindu religion itself showing that they are facets of the same integral whole. Second, it affirmed the common direction of all religions to the one supreme goal.

Swami Vivekananda speaks of Sri Ramakrishna's message as one of 'universal religion'. This universal religion does not mean *one religion* only for the whole world. Such a one religion is not necessary even if it were possible and it is not possible even if it were necessary. It means, on the other hand, the recognition of the fact, the need and the utility of a variety of religions in the spiritual economy, that the symbols of religion may vary, but that their significance is the same. This truth born of the realisation of Sri Ramakrishna is fundamental to the Ramakrishna Movement. It affirms the principle of co-existence among religions and tells a Hindu to be a true Hindu, a Christian to be a true Christian and a Mussalman to be a true Mussalman.

A consequence of this teaching is that it discountenances conversion from one religion into another. For, conversion will be both unnecessary and futile if all religions are paths to the same goal. No religion is atheistic. All religions ... of man to strive for salvation by divinising himself. The means recommended may vary. But every religion, *qua* religion, is and must be acceptable to God. Then, it is a sacrilege to renounce one religion for another. The God of one religion is not different from the God of another religion. That the means recommended by each religion for its followers, if earnestly pursued, help to reach the Supreme has been vindicated by the sages and saints of that religion. And so, if every kind of means does lead to the same goal, there is no meaning in speaking of one type of means as better or truer than another. And, let it be marked, the mystics of every religion have had the same experience, and speak, if they speak at all, in the same language and to the same purpose. Thus, co-existence of all religions and non-interference in the faith and practices of alien religions are two corollaries from the message of Sri Ramakrishna which the movement has pledged itself to in all its activities.

The Ramakrishna Movement also believes that a universal religion bearing the connotation explained above can be significant only on the basis of a Vedantic philosophy which makes a distinction between the transcendental and the empirical, the Paramarthika and the Vyavaharika. Religion is the vehicle which carries the finite man in his journey to the Infinite. The finite man and his journey as also the vehicle are parts of the empirical world of space, time and causality, of distinctions and differences while the Infinite is beyond these distinctions and is unaffected by them. The Infinite has no name or form. What has no name and no form can be conceived of and worshipped by any name and in any form. It is only he who has risen to the supreme height of Advaitic anubhava that can see the vyavaharic religions as neither final nor exclusive. This is the reason why the Ramakrishna Movement carries the message of Vedanta to all thinking minds. It is only from that standpoint that the co-existence of religions can be appreciated. If the monks of the Ramakrishna Order preach the gospel of

t is not to convert other religionists to Hindu-ism, but to plead for harmony among religions and to stabilise the votary of each faith in the religion in which he is born. The monks have established centres of the Mission in several parts of the world with the sole pur-pose of propagating this message of Vedanta.

The present writer is aware that this pproach to the subject of religion is absolutely t variance with that of the proseletysing and onverting religions like Islam and Christia-ty. He knows that every devout Christian els it his obligation to declare — for he onestly believes it — that Christ is the only ue incarnation of God, that His Gospel is e last and the only Truth, and that he must lfil the charge that Christ laid on him to rry it to non-Christians and bring them into e Christian fold. This is so completely posed to the main plank of the Ramakrishna ovement and so uncompromising in the mpulsion of its faith, that there seems to nothing else to do except to say 'let us ree to differ'. At the same time, it is neces-ry to observe that the follower of Sri Rama-ishna does not reject Christ and His Gospel. it he does not agree that He is the only carnation of God and that His Gospel, as erpreted by the Christian missionary, is the ly and final truth. He also begs leave to d that his accepting Christ as a luminary of first magnitude in the firmament of reli-n does not lay on him the obligation to cept the Church and all that it means as necessary implication of the personality of Lord Jesus, as the vehicle of His message d as the sole agency which can guarantee salvation.

And yet, may not one plead that it is high me that the men of the world cried halt to ligious hostilities and learnt to recognise ifferences, understand them and respect them dopting an attitude of 'live and let live'? We are suffering actually from racial, national nd ideological rivalries which only serve to ouse men's passions and to incite them to dharmic ways of life. They do not at all make for Christian feelings of love and cha-rity, they negate every possibility of Peace among men which 'Islam' connotes. There is a need, more urgent now than ever before, to combat the forces of atheism and vanquish them. For this purpose, people of all faiths should combine in a united endeavour with-out wasting their energies in ridicule and recri-mination which, while wastefully sterile of religious merit, is perniciously fertile of the weeds of irreligion. Duty and prudence alike dictate that all religious minded people should close up their ranks internally and align them-selves with men of other faiths on the basis of ideas common to all religions to resist the common foe. The great religions of the world are not mushroom growths of yesterday or today. They all have a great past. Each one of them has been vindicated in the lives of its votaries whom it has disciplined to intense moral and spiritual effort. Every one of them has brought strength, solace and succour to many an anguished heart, counselled every mind in its confusions and has guaranteed salvation to the earnest aspirant. Every reli-gion has been vouched by its numerous saints, mystics who have lived *en rapport* with God. Judged by this pragmatic test, no great reli-gion has failed its people who have striven to live by it sincerely and devoutly. That they all lead to the same Goal is what every pious Hindu reminds himself of when he says in his prayer three times a day :

> Even as the waters that drop from the sky and flow through different beds ultimately reach the sea, so too do obeisances made to all deities reach the Supreme Godhead.

That is what Sri Krishna declared in the con-text of the Gita :

> Whoever worships Me in any form, I make him steadfast in his devotion.

If Arjuna is the man of all times and lands, Sri Krishna is the God of all religions. The God of the Gita is not different in essence from the God of the Bible or of the Holy Quoran. The realisation of this truth is the bedrock of the Ramakrishna Movement.

THE IDEALS OF RELIGION

A. J. SRIVASTAVA

The question 'What is religion?' is often asked and philosophers from times immemorial have attempted to answer it according to their own light. The man on the street is not theologian or philosopher enough to essay the task of providing an answer to this question of all questions, nor like Richard Coeur de lion, can he settle it by taking up his sword so as to force a belief on a whole people, for the days of the Crusades are no more, the days of religious controversies are over, and man must live like man, if he is to live at all.

The toleration preached by all religions, but practised only by a few protagonists of each, teaches us to treat religions like language, and to make ourselves understood we must speak to each person in his own language. The modern analytical mind must be able to see the unity which pervades all religions.

To the Hindu sages of yore religion was realisation — an experience and an inspiration of morality. It could not be acquired through books, but through life. No true Hindu could *afford to baulk* at another and he set about to *solve the problem* of God, of Soul, of Creation and its purpose. *To him* it was 'a constitutional necessity of the human mind'. The belief which emerges from these sages embraces the highest ideals of metaphysics, of moral conduct, of ritualism, of mythology.

In his attempt to answer the question Swami Vivekananda confined himself to setting before the people the tenets of the Vedantic Faith. Speaking to an American audience, he almost bewildered his hearers when he said that Hinduism was a 'Religion of which Buddhism is but a rebel child, and Christianity, with all its idealisms, a far-fetched imitation.' His Hinduism embraced all religions; it tolerated all religions. Theologians who believed with Kipling that

'Oh, East is East, and West is West,

were compelled, as it were, to see the likeness between Christianity and Hinduism. Indeed, the similarity is so close that some went to the extent of seeing Krishna in the guise of Jesus. No doubt, there are a few equally vital differences and Dr S. Radhakrishnan cautions us against treading such delicate ground; for whilst a comparative study of religions may be interesting, 'To compare the sacred books of the East with the holy scriptures of the West is to ignore that feeling of warmth and reverence which each individual has for his own religion.'

The development of the idea of God in Hinduism is supported by Lucian's remark: 'What are men? Mortal Gods. What are Gods? Immortal men.' The same idea is to be found in the Vedas, and Yama's existence lends support to this view. Our philosoph[er] Radhakrishnan says: 'There is a cordial harmony between God and man in Indian thought while the opposition between the two is more marked in the West.' And he has placed before us an ideal of human conduct which is indeed worthy of emulation, when he says that 'To become like Gods is the goal of our endeavour.' In the Nirvana Shatka I, the great Shankara sets forth the concept of God in his own inimitable way when he says:

> 'I am neither the mind, nor the body, nor a[m] I the organs; I am "Sat-chit-ananda" (Existen[ce-] Knowledge-Bliss absolute); I am He, I am He
>
> 'All religions teach the eternity of the soul an[d] also that its lustre has been dimmed; and th[at] its primitive purity is to be regained by the know-ledge of God. To realise this God is the en[d] of all religions.'

A school of Hindu thought preached that 'Ma[n] is a degradation of God'. The Hebrew scriptures say 'Adam fell'. But to the Vedantis[t] 'Every man is a divinity in disguise, a Go[d] playing the fool'. Buddha, however, could not accept this position and he preached hi[s]

'I do not care to know your various theories about God. And what is the use of discussing all your subtle doctrines about the soul? Do good and be good. And this will take you to freedom and to whatever truth there is.'

George Bernard Shaw only echoed the Vedantist's view when he said: 'Life will always be beautiful to us; death will always be beautiful to us.' To Shaw, Life and Death were but the obverse and reverse sides of the same coin. The Bhagavad Gita preaches the doctrine of the eternal continuity and unity of life, of rebirth and transmigration of souls. The Holy Bible reiterates the same thought when it says that the spirit never dies and Jesus believed in 'past lives' for didn't he say 'Before Abraham was, I am' and yet in another place 'This is Elias, who is said to have come.'? Romain Rolland, inspired by the Vedantist ideology, gets his hero in 'Jean Christophe' to exclaim, in a moment of ecstasy:

'I have struggled. I have suffered, I have erred, I have created. Let me draw breath in thy father's arms. Some day I shall be born again for a new fight . . . Hosanna to life! Hosanna to death!'

For centuries sages have toiled to stress the place of Service to Humanity in daily life. In the Bhagavad Gita Lord Krishna advises Arjuna that 'True piety is that which most removes earth-aches and ills'. This doctrine assumed a new meaning for our leaders in the present century when Bhagavan Ramakrishna averred: 'Work is the first chapter of human life. God is the conclusion.' The same message was carried across the seas by his noble disciple, Vivekananda and he said: 'We are the servants of that God, who, by the ignorant is called Man.' Swami Rama Tirtha preached the same ideal when he said: 'Better than any theology is Man. Better than any metaphysical idea of God is woman.' In another place he said: 'The hands that help are better far than the lips that pray.' Mahatma Gandhi lived this ideal and died for it, leaving behind not mere words of advice, but the solid foundations of our body politic on which we can build the great edifice of

The ideal of renunciation has been preached by all prophets — renunciation, not asceticism, is one of the prerequisites of a truly religious man. The Chandogya Upanishad urges:

'The attainment of That (Brahman) comes through discrimination, control of passions, persistence, sacrificial work, purity, strength, and suppression of excessive joy.'

Janaka's is a name familiar to every Hindu, and it signifies a life of perfect renunciation amidst worldly cares. In a word, the Bhagavad Gita advises one to 'Give up', whereas every page of that sacred book advocates a life of intense activity, but amidst eternal calm. Rama Tirtha advised all householders to 'Enjoy all; possess nothing. Be yourself.' To Sannyasins he said: 'Be the witness of earthly joys and sorrows, sharing them not.' Vivekananda preached the highest philosophy when he said: 'You have the power to give. Give, and there it ends.'

Fraternity is acclaimed to be the bond of all the true religions. In the eyes of Islam all its followers are equals. 'That', says Vivekananda, 'is the peculiar excellence of Mahommedanism'. To Vivekananda, 'It matters not whether one is a Christian, or a Jew, or a Hindu. Are you unselfish? That is the question.' All religions are founded on the belief of God being the Creator, and hence the source of all beings. The brotherhood of man follows as a natural corollary of the fatherhood of God. This doctrine gives to all men an equal status, at least in the eyes of God. The Bhagavad Gita enjoins us to

'Look on all beings, friends, lovers, foes, aliens, strangers, as one and the same, with impartiality and with love.'

The scriptures advise:

'Judge not; for who are you to judge?'

The Manu Smriti avers:

'He who befriendeth all creatures, his name is Brahman.'

The Holy Quran says:

'Let not one people or nation scoff or laugh at another people or nation. . . . Assist any person oppressed, whether he be Muslim or non-

Again, on his last pilgrimage the Prophet said to his followers :

> 'Remember, you are all brothers. All men are equal in the eyes of God. . . . All men are sons of Adam.'

No intolerance, no persecution is ever sanctioned by any of the scriptures, yet untold persecution has been perpetrated in the name of religion. The Hindu is wont to regard every living creature down to the humblest insect as his brother and according to one of our philosophers, 'Perhaps this universal concept has diluted the spirit of brotherhood infinitely' but for this one may blame individuals, not the Hindu 'Weltanschauung'. For the Muslim, brotherhood is very intense and effective in the practical sense, but only within the Islamic fold and as Dr M. H. Syed avers : 'Anyone outside Islam, be he the most saintly and most highly evolved soul, is a Kaffir.' The modern man shudders to think of the carnage of Medieval times and the misery which followed in the wake of the Crusades and well might he ask with Bernard Shaw : 'What is the use of being born if we have to decay into unnatural, heartless, loveless, joyless monsters ?'

The Hindu ideal of moral conduct is broad-based and enjoins us not to look back on the past but to 'Think of what you are going to do. Repentance is quite useless. Repentance means going back. And in good, as in evil, we must always go forward.' (Romain Rolland). The language here may be somewhat unconventional and may sound un-Christian, but to the Vedantist, sin is but an error, an aberration from the path of Truth, which can be rectified by the will never to leave that path again. The same thought is echoed by Sir Arthur Harrington who said that 'Our greatness lies not in never failing, but in rising every time we fall.'

The concept of sin differs very widely in every religion. To the Vedantist there is nothing like sin — good and evil are but aspects of the same thing, may be, there is a certain difference of degree : a lie may be just a 'weakness of the flesh'. We are often told that 'We are punished by our sins, not for them'. Weakness is the cause of all suffering, of all errors. The time has almost come when psychiatrists are inclined to say that sin is a deadly disease and that strength is the world's panacea. We are weak because we are ignorant. Says Swami Rama Tirtha : 'We commit sins only in the heart. Resist not evil, but overcome it by love.'

It is difficult to over-estimate the amount of evil which has accrued from a confusion of Morality with Religion. Abraham is commanded by God to sacrifice his son, and Saul is called upon to massacre his captives in cold blood. This lack of spiritual vigour cut Buddha to the quick, and the Compassionate One preached his gospel of Ahimsa. 'The great Buddha' says Radhakrishnan, 'typifies for all time the soul of the East with its intense repose, dreamy gentleness, tender calm and deep love'. Shaw, however, decried our White Tower morality, which for many only 'Consists in suspecting other people of not being legally married'.

Man is expected to earn money and thus support his dependents ; but he must not gamble ; he must not tell lies ; he must not keep wicked company ; and he must not cause trouble to others. All the scriptures enjoin us to lead a pure life. The Chandogya Upanishad enunciates that meditation, charity, right dealing, ahimsa and truthfulness constitute right conduct, as also humility and desirelessness. To Sister Nivedita 'All religions, Indian and others have called a halt in the quest for pleasure. All have sought to turn life into a battlefield rather than a ball-room' whereas Radhakrishnan believes that 'He who chooses the pleasant, misses the end (good)'. The watchword of the Christian prayer is 'Thy will be done upon earth, as it is Heaven !' The attempt is to kill the Ego so that the Self may reign. The central idea of Christian thought is 'Watch and pray, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand'. This means that man is to keep himself in constant readiness to receive God ; he is to purify his mind and

God that He may be with you'. Sakya Muni, like Jesus, 'Came to fulfill and not to destroy' and taught his followers to 'Do good and be good'. The Vedantist's ideal of 'Yoga' (Union) is all-comprehensive, for, to the worker it signified union between man and the rest of humanity; for the mystic, between his lower and higher self; for the 'Bhakta', between himself and the God of love; and to the 'Jnani', the union of all existence. It is the eternal relation between the eternal soul and the eternal God.

Faith and the need for faith, pervades all religions. In this welter of confusion, amidst this sound and fury of mortal existence, with the danger of death always looming large before our eyes, we are kept up only by a faith in God. The faith of our sages teaches us to have faith in the potency of suffering.

> 'The Rishis of ancient India knew no fear and feared no death. Buddha walked out of his palace to suffer and recreate. Christ is the man of sorrows. None who has not suffered to the utmost gets to the foundations of reality.'

'Faith', says the scientist Sir Humphrey Davy, 'is true knowledge'. The faith, however, that stands on authority is no faith; and faith induced by miracles is not faith, but persuasion. Faith like love, is blind, but the one can lead the other. To Sri Ramakrishna reason was weak, but faith, omnipotent. Christ healed the leper and said, 'Thy faith hath made thee whole'.

The modern psychologist knows only too well the tremendous potentialities of faith. The man of religion knows that faith nursed by hope leads to Life Supreme. Seeing the record of mankind one would feel that it is not the 'age of reason', but the 'sage of faith' who carries the day and instead of asking (when one is about to die) 'Is life really its own reward?' a faithful man of religion would say with W. W. Landor 'I am ready to depart' and thus cross over to the Unknown, over the Valley of Death — Death, that Mona Lisa which still smiles its bewitching smile, leaving man in doubt whether even yet its secret has been completely fathomed.

WHAT IS BEAUTY?

(From the *Golden Scripts,* 2nd ed., Chapt. 96. Soulcraft Chapels, Noblesville, Ind., 1951; Jesus speaking thro Medium Wm. Dudley Pelly.)

K. S. RAMAKRISHNA RAO

1. Hear my words concerning Beauty.
2. When ye do possess a thing of beauty, it is strangely aligned with your spiritual natures, but beauty I tell you is not wholly spiritual.
3. Beauty is an esoteric (inner) valuation.
4. Things of beauty are things of perception.
6. Beauty is a perpetual valuation, I say, in that it requireth knowledge for its
8. Beauty is product of knowledge, wedded to wisdom, thru human perception.
11. Wisdom is the wholesome recognition of values that are essence.
15. The making of the thing is art.
16. The transition of the symbol is the concretion of art.
17. This thing ye do: ye but pattern a symbol that rendereth concrete a form of sublimated wisdom that was first perception but which hath passed into

19. Beauty is the essence of perception flowering into exaltation.

22. A thing of beauty is a lasting joy . . . because it performeth a symbolization that is for ever recurrent in the soul of the beholder.

23. Beauty is the transcendent qualification for human endeavoring : it is a Divine Ideal in process of revelation thru perception ; but beauty is more.

24. Beauty is the Divine Ideal in process of revelation through *spiritual perception.*

25. Or put it this way : Beauty is the sense of attraction which your spiritual natures have for Divine revelation on whatever plane of perception ye do elect to make contact.

26. The beauty of the African negress seemeth real to her lover, verily as beautiful as the sister of white flesh to him whose skin is fair.

29. Beauty, ye do say, must have appreciation . . . I say beauty hath a quality within itself for attracting, appealing to, or drawing out, something within each spirit that is part of the Divine Harmony making for order in the universe.

30. Beauty is everyman's concept of Idealism based on the God Essence whereof he is created.

31. Beauty is born of consciousness, therefore it cannot be objective.

32. Whatever is born of consciousness is spiritual in value.

33. But I tell you with vehemence, whatever is beautiful is in degree harmonious.

34. Beauty is the transcendent qualification in human endeavor that maketh consciousness to realize what the eternal meaneth in manifestation.

35. Beauty, I tell you, is always action in that it is movement toward an appreciation of a logos.

40. Beauty is your coadjutor with Nature ; it assisteth you to perform your own spiritual functions.

41. Man is the instrument through which beauty is interpreted.

43. Beauty is your concept of the Divine Ideal in all which ye perceive ideal in the sense of crystallized intent.

44. Beauty is God expressing Himself in matter, *by* and *to* your spiritual consciousness.

59. Beauty is the fact of being able to perceive the cosmic intent behind the idea !

61. But beauty interpreteth for each soul his own gradations into the divine.

SURRENDER

SWAMI NIKHILANANDA

Lying in bed late at night O all-seeing God, I pray
That at dawn opening my eyes Thee I may remember ;
Sitting or moving about in the white light of the day,
Cheerfully I shall bow down at Thy feet and surrender.
As I do the day's work, flits through my mind the unsaid prayer :
At dusk may we sit together when my work is over.
At cowdust hour I pray again that my tired mind be free
Of pain as peace-eyed slumber falls noiseless over my body

THE RELATIVITY OF BHEDA (DIFFERENCE) AND ABHEDA (SAMENESS) AND OF TRUTH

A. NARASINGA RAO

1. Introduction

Vedantic thought, in its great quest for the One and Fundamental Reality which underlies and supports the world of sense and mind perception, is often obliged to raise questions regarding the sameness (*abheda*) or differentness (*bheda*) of various entities. Is the clay from which the pot is made the same as the pot or is it different? Is the rope different from the snake for which it is mistaken? The arguments which are advanced on either side, while very clever, leave one with the feeling that the matter cannot be decided one way or the other. This situation is in sharp contrast to the questions raised in mathematics —is the sum of the angles of a triangle two right angles or is it different from it — where we have a categorical and universally acceptable answer, assuming that the assumptions on which the discussion proceeds are agreed upon as they must be in every fruitful discussion. One naturally asks; is it due to the difference between the two subjects, or can it be due to the questions themselves not having been properly formulated in the former? The object of this paper is to advance a plea that such questions of *bheda* and *abheda* are incomplete and not properly formulated, and that when the missing element, which has the dimension of 'purpose' is supplied, the answers become unambiguous. This seems to lead to a concept like the 'relativity of truth', taking 'truth' with a pragmatic colouring. The ideas advanced in the paper also enable a mode of presentation of Advaita which will not bring it into conflict with the realistic systems of Hindu philosophy.

2. Objects and their Attributes

Let us take a very simple case of a material object like a brass vessel. It has various which I obtain by sense perception or inference therefrom. It is the totality of these attributes that enable me to identify the vessel. If some of these attributes were removed and replaced by others, it becomes for me a different object since my only means of differentiating between different objects is by comparing their attributes, using this word in its widest sense. I can conceive mentally of other objects differing from the object in question in just one attribute, so that even a change in one attribute makes it a different object. Whether anything remains of an object when all its attributes, probably infinite in number, have been abstracted from it — an absolute residue — we need not consider at present since its existence or otherwise will not enable me to decide questions of *bheda* and *abheda* which we are considering. We shall therefore take as a working hypothesis which meets our needs:

> Hypothesis: *Any object is only the sum total of its attributes and may be identified with this totality.* (2.1)

The reader might object that this is an extreme view; that microscopic differences in attributes are unperceived, and that even perceptible changes are tolerated in life without the object being considered as changed thereby, (for example a change of dress in a man). This important question of allowable changes is the very crux of this paper, but it is a convenient starting point to start with the absolute position given above and then consider what modifications are necessary therein.

From the extreme position we have taken, the problem of sameness or difference between two objects is easily answered.

> *No object is the same as any other object. All objects are different from* (2.2)

For, two books identical in every respect, will yet differ in their location as they cannot co-exist in the same place, and position in space and time is also an attribute. The same object thought of twice gives two different locations in time. The very question of difference or sameness can arise only when there is a dichotomy in our concept and since our concept of an object is to be considered one of its attributes (which cannot be easily separated from its attributes *per se*), we have created a difference in the very process of putting our question. The answer has become easy because of the extreme position we have taken.

This philosophy of all-otherness is the opposite number to Sri Sankara's philosophy of all-oneness, and stands equally with it outside the *vyavaharika* plane. In between these two absolutes, we have a continuous series of *vyavaharika* levels which span the gap between them. These will now engage our attention.

3. Essential Differences and Ignorable Differences

In practical life, that is at the *vyavaharika* level, we do not consider two objects as different even if they differ in certain attributes because we regard these differences as minor or irrelevant. Thus if we lend an object or some money, we regard the *same* as returned even if the object be slight worn out or the money is in a different denomination. In other words,

> *out of the totality of attributes of an object we select some as essential and others as ignorable, and regard two objects as the same only when they have the same essential attributes even though they differ in the ignorable attributes.* (3.1)

The selection of the essential attributes could be done in any arbitrary manner so as to lead to a consistent system, but usually this selection is related to a particular purpose or situation. So let us lay down that

> *the test of whether two objects are the same or different is the ... one object could be replaced by the other without the purpose we have in view being affected.* (3.2)

Let us consider a few examples :

If the vessel I lent is returned to me with a hole in it I cannot accept it as the same, as I cannot use it in place of the one I lent for containing water. But if it has been used as a paper weight or was intended to be melted, the hole makes an ignorable difference relatively to these purposes, and I accept the vessel as the same as I lent.

Usually, (that is for most purposes) a change of dress is an unessential or ignorable difference, and we regard the man as the same whatever may be the dress he wears. But we could conceive of a case where the man must be considered different because he has changed his dress. Consider my friend the police inspector with his official dress. I requested him to accompany me in a crowd to attend a big function where his dress will secure for him and for me an easy passage and admission. If he comes in a civilian dress, I shall be justified in saying that he is not the man I invited, seeing that the purpose for which I wanted him is frustrated by the change, whereas even a different man in police dress, will for my purpose be the *same man.*

Similar remarks apply to the words 'equal', 'unequal' which are ambiguous except in relation to a particular purpose or situation. Are all the students in my class 'equal' in my eyes? The question is incomplete unless the purpose or situation is specified. For purposes of teaching they are equal, but if I want to select a son-in-law from among them their differences become essential and they are not at all equal. In a democracy all men are equal for purposes of voting, but not in regard to appointments.

A cricketeer asks a physicist 'Is it true that a cricket ball is mostly emptiness with molecules here and there flying about?'. The physicist will be right in saying: there are several mutually contradictory descriptions of

i.e. in relation to a particular situation. For you, the truth is that a cricket ball is a hard piece of matter of a certain density and elasticity, etc. For one who wishes to vaporise it and find its spectrum it consists of atoms with electrons at various energy levels and transition probabilities, etc.

If we mean by 'truth' a description of reality, we are confronted by the fact that there are different descriptions each valid at its own level, and that none of these has a claim to be the 'supreme truth', unless we agree on a conventional definition of this 'supreme truth'.

Thus it will be seen that

questions regarding sameness or otherness, equality or inequality, truth or untruth are by themselves incomplete and admit of definite answers only when considered relatively to a particular purpose or situation. (3.3)

Thus coming to the sameness or otherwise of clay and a pot made of clay, they are the same, that is can replace each other in any situation where the material is the relevant consideration, but are different for purposes like storing water. A cracked pot is the same as the original good pot if it is a question of storing rice, but are not the same for storing water. *It is the purpose which decides whether they are the same or different.*

4. A Parallel Situation in Mathematics

There is a situation in Mathematics which shows an exact parallelism and throws a flood of light on the distinctions we are thinking of. In Euclid's Geometry, as taught in schools and colleges, we deal with points, lines, triangles, circles etc. A point is supposed to have no attribute except position. A circle, on the other hand, has besides its position, another attribute, namely size, represented by the length of the radius. A triangle has, besides position and orientation, three attributes—the lengths a, b, c of the sides or one length and two angles etc., which fix its size and shape. Euclid calls two figures 'congruent' if one other, i.e., if they can be placed one over the other so as to coincide. While moving one figure so as to place it over the other, we are supposed to change its position but not its shape or size. Let us now restate Euclid's theorems using the familiar words 'same' or 'equal' instead of 'congruent', since all these relations have the same logical properties of reflexivity, symmetry and transitivity. Thus two equal circles are 'the same' even if they occupy different positions; two triangles are the 'same' if their sizes and shapes (hence lengths and angles) are the same. Here we are obviously regarding differences in position as 'ignorable', but differences in size and shape as 'essential' differences. A rotation of a figure or a displacement leaves the figure the 'same'. *Thus Euclid's geometry is the study of those properties of a figure which remain unaltered by the group of translations and rotations.* (4.1)

A still wider group of transformations is one which allows also changes in size though not changes in shape. In this group one is allowed not only to move a figure, but also to expand it uniformly into a bigger or smaller size as we do in the cinema film to get the picture on the screen. Thus all squares are the 'same' in this Geometry, but a square is different from a rectangle. *Hence in this 'Geometry of similarity transformations', differences in shape are essential differences, but differences of size are ignorable.*

There is another geometry known as 'projective geometry' developed in the 19th century. Here we regard any plane figure and its projection (that is, the shadow cast by that figure on a plane screen when illuminated by a point source of light not lying on either plane) as belonging to the same class. Since a circle can be made to cast a circular shadow of any size, we have to regard all circles as 'equal' or the 'same'. But a circle can also be projected into an ellipse, or a hyperbola or a parabola. So in this geometry all conic sections, whatever their size, are indistinguishable from each other, i.e., their differences are 'ignorable'. But a straight line cannot cast

to this class, and is 'different'. It can be shown that any triangle can be made to cast a shadow on any other triangle if we adjust the light and the screen properly. So all triangles, whatever be their sizes or shapes are indistinguishable in this geometry, but a quadrilateral is different from a triangle since it cannot cast a triangular shadow. Any quadrilateral can be made to cast a shadow which is a square. So all quadrilaterals belong to the same class. If we regard all members of the same class as 'equal' or 'indistinguishable' or 'the same', then we will have a consistent geometry (that is, one in which $A = A$, $A = B$ implies $B = A$, and $A = B$ and $B = C$ implies $A = C$) in which the difference between an equilateral and a non-equilateral triangle is an ignorable difference, though from the standpoint of Euclidiean Geometry the distinction between them is an essential difference. But a circle is 'essentially different' from a triangle in both the geometries.

There is a still higher geometry,—higher in the sense that it allows the more drastic group of continuous transformations—called 'Topology'. Here all continuous changes of shape and size are allowed but discontinuous changes which carry infinitesimally near points to finitely distant points are barred. Thus I can start with a triangle of any shape and size, gradually round off the corners, bend the sides, and shape it into a circle or an ellipse. I can also create corners and gradually make it into a quadrilateral. So triangles, circles, quadrilaterals, polygons, ovals—all these belong to the same class. So we shall say they are 'the same', or that the differences between them are 'ignorable differences'. But we are not allowed to cut or join—the use of scissors or gum is prohibited—and so we cannot cut a circle and gradually knead it into an open semicircle or convert a circle into a figure of 8. Thus the distinction between an open curve and a simple closed curve which does not cut itself survives all the drastic transformations of this group and is thus an essential difference in this geometry. Hence confining ourselves themselves, all differences have become ignorable except the one difference between closed curves and open curves. We have thus reduced our universe into a Dvaita world of two categories.

Let us pass on to the final stage and allow not only continuous changes like bending and stretching but also discontinuous changes like cutting and joining. In other words we allow the use of scissors and gum also. We thus allow an open curve to be converted into a closed curve and *vice versa* and a figure of 8 curve to be converted into an oval by resolving the knot in the middle. We shall find now that all curves are reducible to the circle, so that all differences have been smoothed out, except the difference between existence (Sat) and non-existence (Asat), since we are allowed only to transform curves and not to create or destroy them. This is something like Advaita with a Nirguna Brahman as the sole reality, since all attributes except existence have been ironed out. If creation of one entity (say of a circle) or its destruction be also permitted, we can transform any curve into a circle and destroy it, or proceed the other way, so that even existence or otherwise of a figure ceases to be an attribute and we have a world of *Sunya*.

5. The Philosophy of Bheda and Abheda

In the course of the above mathematical approach we have met with a hierarchy of geometries, each consistent in itself, so that no proposition of any geometry contradicts another proposition of the same geometry. Each geometry has its own transformation group and objects which can be transformed into one another by the operations of the group are said to be in the same class, or conventionally defined as 'equal', or '*Abheda*' and the difference between them are 'ignorable differences'. But objects which cannot be transformed into one another are said to belong to different classes, i.e., their differences are to be considered essential. The points to be noted are: (i) at each level (or in each

consistently* whether two objects are the same or different; (ii) that objects which are not the same in one geometry become the same in another geometry, *i.e.*, essential differences at one level become 'ignorable' at another level.

In the application of these ideas to the philosophy of *Bheda* and *Abheda*, we are not dealing with geometrical figures but other entities physical or mental, and instead of different transformation groups, associated one with each geometry, we have different situations or 'purposes'. Two objects which may be considered the 'same', (*i.e.* which can replace each other) for one purpose or in relation to a certain order of ideas, will have to be considered different in relation to another purpose or in relation to a different situation or order of ideas, like the cracked pot being the same as the uncracked pot for storing rice but not for storing water.

6. Different Level of Activities or of Consciousness

A human being has to carry out activities at various levels as part of the general scheme of life. At one end of the scale of existence and because he is associated with a physical body, he responds to mechanical forces just like any piece of inert matter. At the vital level his sense organs and his digestive and circulatory systems function in exactly the same manner as those of any living animal. At the other end of the scale, he is a thinker and a dreamer who seeks to merge his individual consciousness into a supreme all embracing cosmic consciousness. At each level of activity he has to recognise certain distinctions as 'essential' in relation to that activity and others as ignorable in that situation. For purposes of chemistry the distinction between diamond and charcoal becomes ignorable—they are the same as text-books assert—but for purposes of jewelry they are different. To ask whether two things are the same or different without mentioning the *purpose is to* ask an incomplete question which *admits of* both answers.

Are all men 'equal'? Yes and No. Of course there are differences between men and men; but the question is, Are they ignorable or essential? In a modern democracy, all men are considered equal so far as civic rights like voting are concerned, but not for appointments to posts of responsibility.

Is a rope the same as a snake? Yes and No. If it has been mistaken for a snake and a man got so frightened by it that he got fever and died, as happened to a friend of mine, the distinction is ignorable. The rope was a snake for him. I do not say that it was mistaken for a snake, because according to my definition of *Abheda*, the rope actually took the place of the snake and did the duty of a snake as effectively as a real snake. But if the man recognised that it was a rope and got over his fear, then for him it was only a rope. But it may be argued: 'It was really a rope though it was mistaken for a snake. A more careful examination would have revealed that it was a rope and not a snake.' My reply to the above argument is that there is no point in guessing what other course events may have taken under hypothetical conditions and drawing conclusions therefrom. *It may be that it* was not a rope but a toy snake so cleverly made that it looked not only like a snake but also moved like a snake. But it may be argued that even then, if the toy snake had been cut into pieces it would have been seen that it is made of rubber with hidden mechanisms. But who said it was made of rubber? It could have been made of synthetic materials imitating snake skin and snake flesh and endowed with an artificial heart pumping artificial blood so cleverly as to deceive even a biologist. In practical life we do not follow this infinite regress but stop at a certain stage and it may be that the toy snake was so cleverly made as to stand examination up to this stage. We are thus moving farther and farther away from the original question of the snake and the dying man into chemical analysis of artificial

* The 'consistency' lies in the fact that 'sameness' is a symmetric relation between two objects with the further property that if A is the same as

The question of whether a particular object was 'really' a snake raises question about a prior definition of reality which we shall both have to agree upon.

7. Are Objects Really Different?

If it is asserted that two things are 'really the same' only if they have identical attributes, then the answer is as stated already in (2. 2) that *any two objects are different* because in the very act of defining separately the two objects so as to enable us to apprehend them individually before deciding whether they are really the same, we have produced a dichotomy and hence a difference in one of their attributes, namely the way in which we apprehend them. If it is argued that the way we apprehend an object is not an attribute of the objects *per se,* but only a relation between us and the *thing-in-itself*, the obvious answer is that we never come into contact with things-in-themselves except through such a relation; in fact, that all perceived attributes are relations between ourselves and the objects perceived.

I submit that all questions whether two things are 'really different' are improper questions. The proper question is whether the differences between them of whatever nature are ignorable or essential, and this question is complete only when the 'purpose' or 'situation' in relation to which the question is put is clearly specified.

Is artificial milk which indistinguishable from true cow's milk in all its chemical, nutritive and other properties 'really' the same as cow's milk or is it different? This question is, according to me an improper question which admits of both answers. The only attribute in which they differ, as per our hypothesis, is that the former was produced in a manner different from the way in which a cow manufactures milk by physiological processes. The proper question is 'Does it make an essential difference?' For purposes of nutrition it does not, but for purposes of in cost between maintaining a cow and running a milk producing laboratory. This clear cut answer is not obtaining when we ask the question in the form 'are they really different?'

Is $8 + 8$ the same as 16? We know that for all arithmetical operations $8 + 8$ can be replaced by 16 without invalidating the conclusions. But two beams each 8 feet long but having the other dimensions the same, are not as useful separately as a single piece 16 feet long. So for utility in constructional work $8 + 8 < 16$. On the other hand for convenience of carrying $8 + 8 < 16$, the symbol $<$ meaning 'is more convenient than'. Arithmetically $1 + 1 = 2$, but a diamond weighing 2 carats is far more costly than two diamonds each weighing one carat. I recognise the arithmetical equality of Rs. 1,000 and 1 lakh of naye paise, but I shall be unwilling to accept the payment of a thousand rupees all in naye paise. The frantic efforts one sometimes makes to get small change for a currency note shows that arithmetical equality does not ensure equality at the *vyavaharika* level.

8. Advaita Doctrine as an Existence Proposition

In the *vyavaharika* world, for every situation there are certain distinctions which are essential—such as between food and poison for purposes of eating—and other distinctions which are ignorable. What then is the significance of the Advaita doctrine of the oneness of all things?

From the point of view developed above the assertion of the one-ness of two objects is meaningless without the further specification of the situation or purpose in relation to which the statement is made. Hence the only interpretation we can give of the Advaita doctrine is that *there exists a purpose, or level of activity, or situation in relation to which all differences must be considered 'ignorable'*,—something like the geometry in which there is only distinction between existence and non-existence. Since the aim of Vedanta is the search for the unity which underlies all the diversity

one withdraws farther and farther from the world of activity and thought and concept into an inner world of the self, states of consciousness arise in which the grosser distinctions and then the subtler distinctions of normal consciousness appear as 'ignorable' differences and fade away leaving only an intense awareness of one and only one entity—the Self. This is the Samadhi state where all sense-contacts with the external world have ceased, all physiological functions reduced to the barest minimum and consciousness is at the Sat-Chit-Ananda level. I shall be, however, more modest and say simply that *Advaita vedanta asserts the existence of a situation in which all differences are 'ignorable'*. (8.1)

9. The Principle of Complementarity and the Relativity of Truth

The thesis that has been advanced in this paper, namely that the truth of even such a simple statement like 'A is the same as B' or 'A is different from B' is not quite determinate, but is relative to the particular situation in which the statement is made, is so shocking to our intuitive notion of the absoluteness and universality of 'truth', that one may well pause before accepting it. Let me, therefore, submit further material in confirmation of my thesis from such a sober subject as Physics. Physics observes certain aspects of nature, builds up hypotheses which will account for the observations and repeatedly subjects them to impersonal objective tests suggested by the hypotheses. There is practical unanimity among savants in this science regarding the 'truth' of the theories they advance. Thus all matter is supposed to be made up ultimately of tiny particles. Each particle has a definite mass and at each instant a definite position in space, and a definite velocity and is subject to forces which determine its motion in accordance with Newton's Laws of Motion. Besides matter, there is another entity called energy which is usually propagated in the form of waves—waves of heat, light or electro-magnetic waves as they are otherwise called. Waves, on the other are spread out over a whole region, and can be considered as made up of a large number of harmonic components, each having its own velocity and amplitude and phase. A wave-packet which is a superposition of separate harmonic waves will have a group velocity—the velocity with which the packet travels though changing shape all the time—different from the velocities of the individual waves. Thus the particle and wave concepts are widely different and each has its field of applicability, the first in connection with matter, the second in connection with radiation. This was the situation in Classical Physics which reached its zenith at the end of the 19th century.

The advent of Quantum Mechanics which was forced on physicists when they began to study the physics of the atom, changed the whole of the above picture profoundly. It is found that it is no longer possible to maintain the dichotomy between waves and particles, in spite of the fundamental differences between these two concepts. When a beam of electrons, which are certainly particles of matter pass through a thin gold leaf, we get a diffraction pattern which is typical of the diffraction of a beam of light-waves. On the other hand, the photo-electric effect showed that luminous energy possesses a granular structure which cannot be reconciled with the undulatory conception of Fresnel, a conception which was also based on solid experimental proof. The modern physicist finds that in order to describe observable realities it may be necessary to use in turn, and even simultaneously two or more apparently contradictory pictures. But the penalty of the use of two incompatible descriptions of the same object is a logical crash somewhere! How does micro-physics avoid this catastrophe? It does so by making each of these pictures less sharp and clear than in classical physics. The particle's position can be measured to any degree of accuracy but such a measurement interferes with its velocity in an uncontrollable manner with the result that the less our error in measuring the position, the more our ignorance of the exact

twin attributes of position and momentum, the particle emerges in micro-physics as a blend of the two, with more or less of the one associated with less or more of the other. The wave in its simplest and purest form is a plane monochromatic wave which does not give any privileged role to any particular point of space or to any particular instant of time. In its pure state it represents a movement, a dynamical condition with the location or particle aspect completely suppressed. A wave packet in which a number of elementary waves combine to produce a hump somewhere is a compromise in which the geometrical or the locational aspect is somewhat emphasised at the expense of the dynamical. The character of this compromise is determined by Heisenberg's 'indeterminacy relations' which involve *h*, Planck's quantum of action. Because of this, the more the wave aspect asserts itself, the more the particle aspect recedes into the background, till it completely vanishes when the wave aspect has full play, and hence a contradiction is avoided. The compromise picture is embodied in Schroedinger's ψ function which enables us to calculate the possible values which the geometrical variable x will be found to have on measurement with the probability of their occurrence, and similarly the possible values which a measurement of the dynamical variable —the momentum p—will reveal and the probabilities of their respective occurrence.

The above result that in our description of the ultimate particles of nature we shall be obliged to employ mutually contradictory descriptions, has been elevated into a principle called the 'Principle of complementarity'. Hence if a modern physicist is asked 'does light behave like a particle or like a wave?', his reply will be 'The two descriptions are contradictory, but each is relevant to its own situation. In its interaction with matter, light behaves as if it consisted of individual particles each carrying a concentrated energy $h\nu$ where ν is the frequency of the monochromatic light wave. On the other hand in its interaction with radiation, the wave picture is relevant

diffraction. The two descriptions are 'complementary' because they apply to different situations'.

Another example of the principle of complementarity occurs in micro-physics when we study systems of similar particles like electrons in an atom. We usually assume that we can identify each particle by attaching a fixed number to it and can follow its evolution in the course of time. Knowing the exact position at any instant and its velocity and acceleration, its position at a later instant can be calculated. But in quantum mechanics a highly exact determination of the position of the particle makes it impossible to find its velocity and hence to predict the location at a later time except between wide limits. It happens therefore that the zones of location of particles encroach on one another. We can no longer follow the individuality of the several particles, since the only distinction between them, namely their difference in location in space has disappeared. Thus in quantum physics, we must be content to say of a collection of elementary particles of the same nature, that so many of them are in a particular state, so many others in another state, but we cannot say of any particular particle what state it is in. In order to distinguish a particle it is necessary to tear it from the system to which it belongs and to isolate it. On the other hand a system of identical particles between which there are strong interaction-potential-energies is a sort of unity of a higher order, represented by a single ψ function and having an individuality in which the constituents are more or less blended, and from which they are difficult to isolate because of their strong mutual interaction. Thus individuality and group behaviour are two complementary characteristics. We shall have to make use of both these mutually contradictory pictures, each in its appropriate situation. There is no unique answer to the question, Is a person's behaviour conditioned by his individual thought and experience or does it conform to the group mind of the group to which he belongs? By himself he may be quite a different being from

It is true we have covered only a very limited field — the field of simple statements like A is B or A is not B, but at least in this field it has been overwhelmingly evident that the truth value of such statement depends on the situation, that is, that *truth is relative and not absolute*. A stronger form of the same would be following the proposition, 'Given any statement which is true for a certain situation, there always exist other situations in which the same statement becomes false.' And such a proposition must be examined not only for simple statement like A is B, but also for more complicated statements. For example, one may ask are there any situations in which statements like 'A line two inches long is greater than a line one inch long', or 'The sum of the angles of a triangle is equal to two right angles' becomes false? The consideration of such complicated statements must await another paper. It would appear that the relativity of truth persists even for such statements with reasonable and acceptable meanings for the words used. I may also add that ancient Indian tradition is based on the concept of the relativity of truth, for they say that the truths about the universe and God as revealed in the Vedas are not to be revealed to any one who may ask for it but only to those who are fit for that knowledge as judged by the Guru, and there are many traditional stories of the preceptors having given different and contradictory answers to the same question put to him by different disciples.

BHAGAVAN BUDDHA AND HIS MESSAGE

T. KRISHNAJI

Bhagavan Buddha is the ninth of the ten Avatars of Lord Vishnu, revered by the Hindus and hailed as a great Teacher by a large section of mankind. He belongs to the line of historic personages. Mr Saunders says, 'He is the greatest of Indian seers, at once the last of her great Upanishadic Rishis, and first of her great heretics'. To the Hindu, Buddha is a god; but Buddhism is heresy. Buddhists revere him as god; but Buddhism has no god. It all seems a paradox.

Buddha lived in the sixth century before Christ. It was an age of religious and philosophic awakening in and around India. Confucious and Lao Tze in China, Maharishi Zarathustra in Iran, Pythagoras, Heraclitus, Thales, Aneximander, and several others in East Asia and Greece, preached doctrines akin to the Upanishads, probably derived from India or independently thought out. Each thinker gave vigour and fresh direction to the religious life of the people.

Hinduism holds the Vedic teaching as supreme. Two rivers, of thought and action, the Vedanta, were intended to supplement each other for a spiritual life. But, one with the rituals and sacrifices, and the other for Jnana and asceticism, in course of time, became cross currents. Ritualism, promising fruits of action, became more popular and widely practised. God was ignored as irrelevent and remote. Rituals were so popular that even unfit persons performed them. The cleavage between the two schools became rigid and pronounced. Bhagavad Gita seems to counsel a golden mean between the two schools of thought. Mundaka Upanishad warns that ritualism is a frail raft, yielding temporary gains. Man is an egoist and full of desires (trishna). Self effacement is essential for a spiritual life, and karma is a bondage. History, social, political or religious, is a challenge and response. In the widespread ritualism and sacrifices of the Purva Mimamsa lay the seeds of challenge; and the response came from Kshatriya princes and teachers, Vardhamana Mahavira and Bhagavan Buddha.

Vardhamana and Buddha belong to the

and he left home in his 28th year and after 12 years of tapas, became a 'Jina' and Maha Vira (great spiritual conqueror). He emphasised right knowledge and conduct and ascetic life. His was a protest against ritualism. Like the Purva Mimamsaka, he ignored God. He went a little further, denying Vedic authority. The Jinas themselves became gods and were worshipped. Rishaba Dev of Hindu Puranas was a Jina and Maha Vira was the 24th Jina.

The next challenge to ritualism came from Buddha. He is the 24th Buddha, King Sibi being one of the early Buddhas. Suddhodana was a king of Kapilavastu. He had two wives, Mahamaya Devi and Mahaprajapati. Maya Devi's father was Suprabuddha, ruler of Devadaha. When Maya Devi was proceeding to her parents' place, she gave birth to the future Buddha, in the Lumbini forest, in between two 'sala' trees. (It may be noted that Buddha died in between two 'sala' trees. Maya Devi died on the 7th day of the birth of Buddha, the coincidence may be noted that the Buddha had left for forest on the 7th day of the birth of his son Rahula.) The babe was named Gautama and nicknamed Siddhartha (it is the 252nd name in the Vishnu Sahasranama). Siddhartha, in his previous life, was called Sumedha. The child was reared by his step mother Maha Prajapati. Rishi Kaladeva, the family priest, came from heaven and Suddhodana presented the babe to the Rishi for his blessings. But who can bless One whose blessings all seek. The Rishi reverently rose, praying 'O Babe, I worship, Thou art He'.[1] He prayed to Buddha in the language of Mahavakya 'Tat Tvam Asi'. Buddha was married to Bimba called Yasodhara at an early age of 16 and for 14 years he led a life of pleasure. A boy was born to him named Rahula. Siddhartha had fulfilled the debt of pitris and the three purusharthas. He sought the fourth, Moksha. Siddhartha was born with a mission and after the birth of Rahula, the spirit of renunciation took hold of him and he would not brook delay in retiring. He silently stole himself away from his dear wife and child and the palace of pleasures. It is a picture of renunciation in bold colours.

Sri Rama left for the forest to fulfil the plighted word of his father. Siddhartha left for the forest to attain buddhahood. His favourite horse Kantaka took him to the banks of the river Anoma (illustrious). The horse could not suffer separation from him and died. Siddhartha removed the tuft of hair. Buddha had left all to seek the cure for human misery. Kaivalya Upanishad boldly asserts that immortality is gained by Renunciation (Tyaga) alone. Gods were moved at the sight and Maha Brahma appeared and presented Siddhartha with the requisites of a monk.

Siddhartha proceeded to the two famous sages, Allara Kalama and Uddaka and learnt from them religious lore and Ashtanga Yoga. He left them to perfect practice. Kathopanishad says, 'Nayam Atma pravachanena labhyo na medhaya na bahuna srutena.' Siddhartha retired to a forest called Uruvela (near Gaya) and led an austere life. Mortification, however, told on his health. Gita counsels *yukta ahara* for a spiritual life. Body is the vehicle for spiritual attainment. 'Nayam atma balahinena labhyah', Spiritual life is not for the weak. Siddhartha resumed taking food and his companions left him. Loneliness is a spiritual help. As the Sufi says 'Alone to Alone'. Sex sense is the greatest obstacle to peace of mind and Siddhartha conquered the forces of Mara. He overcame all such evil forces and settled himself in samadhi. Peace and light radiated about him. A girl by name Sujata offered him milk and rice in a golden plate, which he took, again came back to the Bodhi tree, spread darbha (grass) for his seat (throne of wisdom) and sat in meditation for seven weeks delighting in the bliss of Self. All obstacles ceased and he obtained illumination. He attained to omniscience and Buddhahood. He crossed the ocean of misery. The serpent king held his hood over Buddha to give him shade. Sumedha, Siddhartha, now became Buddha. Buddha solemnly uttered :

'How blest the happy solitude
Of him who hears and knows the truth :

1 *Life and Teachings of Buddha* by Devamitta

And self restraint towards living things:
How blest from passion to be free,
All sensuous joys to leave behind:
Yet far the highest bliss of all
To quit the illusion false "I am".'[2]

The perennial problem of philosophy is the nature of the Self. The Upanishadic philosophy postulates one Reality, and the world of differences, and false 'I am', as illusory. All misery is due to Avidya, kama and karma. Buddha's path of dependent origination is to fade out Avidya. Vedanta says that the path of knowledge alone will lead to Reality.

Buddha thought of going to the Brahmin sages Allara Kalama and Uddaka but they were no more. His companions, who left him at Uruvela were persuaded to accept the truth of his message.

Quick came followers to his doctrine from the Brahmin class. He sent them to proclaim the doctrine. 'Only because the Buddha Himself instructed the disciples in the Doctrine, and that they were mostly Brahmans and men who had already passed their whole lives in self denial, meditation, and holy striving for emancipation, was it possible for them to go forth as itinerant preachers in the short space of five months.'[3] Most of his principal disciples were drawn from the Brahmin and Kshatriya clans. It must be noted that there was no opposition to the Buddha from the Hindus at that time, except from the people adhering to the school of Purva Mimamsa.'[4]

Lord Buddha has been referred to as an Avatar in several Hindu works and prayers. In the Vishnu Padadi Kesanta stotra, verse 49, Sri Sankara refers to him as the conqueror of the mind, 'manasija vijayi'.

Vadair vimohayati yajna krito adharhan.
Tatah kalau sampravritte sammohaya surad visham.—*Bhagavata.*

Buddha-rupam samasthaya
Sarva-rupa-parayana,
Mohayan sarva-bhutani
Tasmai mohatmane namah.—*Bhishma-stavaraja.*

Chandra-satanana kunda suhasa
Nandita daivata nanda supurna
Daitya vimohaka nitya sukhade
Deva subodhaka Buddha swarupa.
Dwadasastotra by SRI MADHAVACHARYA.

Kesava-dhrita Buddha-sarira
—*Gita Govinda* by JAYADEVA.

In the context of the religious conditions in India with the widespread rituals and sacrifices by persons unfit to perform them, Buddha's advent, with a mission to spread love and kindness and wean away people from their adherence to ritualism, was necessary. Shock treatment is required sometimes. God knows how to deal with vice and virtue. He had taken the avatar of Mohini to delude the Daityas. It was Lord's lila.

On the positive side, Buddha was supreme as a teacher and organiser. He emphasised ethical conduct by his eightfold and fourfold paths. He was an empirical philosopher, discouraging all speculative thoughts and vain disputations. Buddha cared for the means and not ends. Dr Radhakrishnan says:

'Buddha's doctrine is a restatement of the Upanishadic truths with a fresh emphasis. In Buddha, we find a powerful combination of spiritual profundity, moral strength, and discreet intellectual reserve.'

Buddha referred to himself as 'Tathagata', one who tread the path of his predecessors. To the serpent King, Buddha said:

The highest bliss of all
To quit the illusion false 'I am'.

The ego or the false 'I' must be effaced to awaken the 'Self'. Buddha's message consists in a restatement of nivritti marga, emphasising that life is misery, and that the path lay in ethical conduct and effacement of avidya. His silence over the metaphysical problems was practical and pragmatic. Buddha was referred to by Amarsimha as an 'Advayavadi'.

Then the question arises, if Buddha was a Upanishadic seer, why should the charge of atheism be levelled against him? This has been an unjust accusation against him due to misunderstanding of his message and his silence

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[2] Life of the Buddha by H. C. Warren, p. 87.
[3] Message of Buddhism by Subhadra Bhikshu, pp. 19-20.

was revered by the agnostics and atheists in later times. Sir Francis Younghusband, in his introduction to the book, 'Some Sayings of the Buddha', says :

> 'Buddha could never have denied God or propounded negative doctrines. He was silent on the nature of God, not from any inadequacy of appreciation, but excessive reverence.'

He further quotes Mrs Rhys Davids,

> 'The educated man in Buddha's day believed in Deity as immanent in each man as the Most, the Highest, the Best in that man's spiritual being or self.'

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa said referring to the Buddha :

> 'Why atheist? He was not an atheist. He simply could not express his inner experiences in words. Do you know what "Buddha" means? It is to become one with Bodha, pure intelligence, by meditating on That which is of the nature of Pure Intelligence; it is to become Pure Intelligence Itself. When one realizes Swarupa, the true nature of one's Self, one attains a state that is something between asti, is and nasti, is not.[5]

Malunkyaputta, one of his disciples, approached the Buddha with certain doubts, whether soul and body are separate or whether soul survives death ; but the Master sternly rebuked him and narrated the parable of a man wounded by an arrow refusing to allow the removal of the arrow without knowing the nature of the arrow, and who had shot it. Such things do not profit any one. Life is misery and one should try to end it. He did not appeal to tradition or his own authority. He wanted his disciples to examine for themselves.

> 'Pariksha Bhiksho grahyam
> Mad vacho na tu gauravat.'

Buddha himself did not leave any writing ; and in his own lifetime, disputes and schisms arose amongst his disciples. It was said that there were about 30 schools of Buddhism and that by itself is sufficient to show that the real teaching of the Buddha was either lost or obscured by doctrines attributed to him. If the Buddha had denied gods, it would be surprising that his disciples should deify him.

The Buddha's daily habits were to rise early, beg food, teach the disciples as to how to meditate and exhort people to follow the right path. He observed 'chaturmasya' and the other principles of sannyasa. But his originality lies in establishing group life of the bhikshus and admission of women into the Bhikshu order. He warned Ananda that admission of women into the order will cut short the life of sangha by half. He lived for 80 years and took ill taking some noxious food, edible mushrooms.

It was said that Buddhism died in the land of its nativity by the fraternal embrace by the Hindu religion by deifying the Buddha. Sri Devamitta Dharmapala remarks that 'the unlearned critics say that Buddhism met its fate at the hands of Kumarilla Bhatta and Sri Sankara'. After the passing away of the Buddha, several schools of thought with alien ideas of nihilism, mentalism arose, and each school turned out to be the rival of the other; and some of them took to secret Tantraism. When the rot had set in, Buddhism ceased to be a force what with the rise of the Bhakti movements, of the Saiva Nayanmars and Vaishnava Alwars in the south ; and in the north, the Muslim ravages wiped out all Buddhistic institutions.

The message of the Buddha comprised the ancient Hindu doctrines with certain emphasis on 'Dukkha' and the doctrine of karma, and maintained that the end of Dukkha lay in right conduct and aspirations and meditation. He laid the ground work for the metaphysical philosophy of later times. He had not denied Self. A young man in search of his run-away mistress asked the Buddha, if he had seen her. The Buddha replied to him, 'Were it not better ye sought the Self?'. Mr Saunders remarks that 'it is remarkable that he who taught millions a sane doctrine of the Divine and of the human, should be accused of denying God and the Soul'. It is true that the Buddha kept silent on several metaphysical problems. Sri Sankara in the commentary on verse 99 of Alatasanti prakarana of Mandukya Karika says that the Buddha did not speak

triputi of Jnana, Jneya and Jnata. But he says that the Buddha reached the outskirts of the Advaita vastu by some process of thought. Thus the Buddha seems, to me, to have paved the way for the metaphysical philosophy of Sri Gaudapada and the Absolute philosophy of Sri Sankara.

Lord Buddha had completed his mission on earth. He called Ananda and other disciples and imparted the final message, that life is transitory; and hence the need to work for salvation with diligence to attain supreme wisdom. He was born in between two sala trees on the day of Vaisakha Purnima and on the Vaisakha Purnima day he obtained illumination under the Bodhi tree. On the Vaisakha Purnima day, too, he laid himself in between two sala trees with his head to the north, entered into deep samadhi and gave up his body.

Passage of over 2,500 years has not dimmed his Divine Personality. Freed from all miracles and myths, the Buddha is the greatest human personality, abiding ever with us, pervading peace and love about him, with a sweet smile playing betwixt his lips. Like the Lord of silent wisdom, Sri Dakshinamurti, the Buddha sits in padmasana with the jnana mudra betokening the unity of Life. He is not only the Light of Asia, but of the *world*. He is Buddha-*Bhagavan*.

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THE ABSOLUTE AND ITS SPORT ARE INSEPARABLE

SISTER SAVITRI

'The Absolute and Its sport are inseparable.' Thus told Sri Ramakrishna once to Keshab Sen. It is the basic doctrine of the Vedanta, only there Shakti is called 'Maya'. Most of us will have read this a hundred times, will agree with it, will claim it to be the only possible way to look at life. But is this, apparently so familiar, doctrine not for most of us merely an intellectual speculation, a speculation beyond which our human intellect cannot go on arguing? And therefore we agree with it, are satisfied with it and, let it be at that.

However, if once we look sharper, experience shows that among those who are inclined to spiritual life, who search for Realization, there are two clearly distinguished groups. One consists of those who strive for the Absolute, the Formless, Brahman. Usually they look with a little disdain upon the other group, the Bhaktas, because they think the worship of a personal God, in which form soever, to be inferior, as belonging to the realm of Maya. The Bhaktas, on the other hand, are usually so fond of their chosen form of God that most of them don't care much for the Absolute. They have no place left in their mind for any such thought. They wish 'to enjoy the sugar, not to become the sugar', as Sri Ramakrishna once explained. Although it is left to every seeker of Realization to choose his own path and the Ideal which appeals to him most, it is nevertheless very important to be at the same time also aware of the other aspect. But

if we once make a *practical* attempt to do so : to imagine, to meditate both aspects of the Divinity — with form and without form — most aspirants will find this rather difficult, almost impossible. This problem can also not be solved by any further discussion because it will remain only in the intellectual sphere. But there exists one of the most beautiful Bengali songs by Swami Premeshananda, whose first lines give us a wonderful picture for an attempt of combining in our imagination the Formless and a beloved Divine Form.

Arupa sāyare lilā-lahari uthila mridula karunāvāy,	In the Ocean of the Formless, eternal sport of waves, rose a gentle breeze of Mercy,
Ādiantahīn, akhande vilin, Māyāy dharile mānavakāy.	Endless and beginningless, absorbed in the Undivided, and induced by Maya's will, Thou assumed a human form.
Maner opāre kothā kon desh, Shashi tapaner nāhi paravesh,	From which sphere beyond the mind, from which land didst Thou emerge ? Neither sun nor moon can reach there ;
Tava hāsirāshi kirana barashi ujale sethāo chāru vibhāy.	Only the rays of Thy radiant Smile pour there forth in splendid lustre.
Premer e tanu atanu-ganjan *ki* madhura vibhā vikāshe nayan	Put to shame by this Love-Body is the god of love himself. Oh what charming radiance emanate these eyes !
Je here se jan tanu-prāna-man, charane arpana karite chāy.	Whosoever beholds this Being cannot but offer body, life and mind at his Lotus-Feet.
Tomāri āshāy kata jug gata sanshay jata, āji tirohita	How many ages have gone by hoping in vain for Thee ! How many doubts there ever were, they all have vanished now.
Jā āche āmār laha upāhār sapinu jivana tava sevāy.	Take whatever is mine, take it all as oblation ! My whole life I dedicate to the service of Thee.

'From the Ocean of the Formless eternal sport of waves' — what a wonderful picture, and yet how difficult to imagine : the sport — of waves — of the Formless. To our limited human mind it almost seems a contradiction. Can the Formless have waves ? Waves belong to the realm of form. How then can the Formless have waves ? And of which nature may they be ? Are they like floating clouds ? Like waving mist ? All this seems still far too concrete, too limited. There further will arise the question : Can That, which is *immovable*, sport ? Already we are falling back in our old habit of separating, what is inseparable.

But to imagine the sun and its rays or the fire and its burning-power as one, is a quite natural conception for our mind. Why is it then so difficult to imagine the Formless and its forms as one ?

The sun and its rays, the fire and its burning-power belong both to the same ... the realm of form, perceivable with our senses ; and even the sceptical intellect agrees with this experience of the senses as it conforms to the results of scientific examinations.

But in the case of the Formless and its forms, this is different. They apparently belong to different realms. The forms and their play are perceivable to our senses and conceivable to the intellect. But the Formless ? There does not exist any way of approach for our senses or intellect. We have to use another medium. Which ? Intuition ? The often mentioned sixth sense ? We can only search and try. But we are not accustomed to the use of such a subtler medium. Therefore we have at first to train ourselves in its proper use. Then we have to deal with another problem : one cannot move in two different spheres or elements at the same time. We cannot with one foot walk on the earth and with the

long habit we are not able to immediately disengage ourselves from the use of senses and intellect in our attempts of meditating on forms. So, what to do?

Divine Mother once told Sri Ramakrishna: 'Remain in Bhāvamukha'. Bhava is regarded to be the most subtle state of mind. In the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* it has been translated with 'threshold' — the threshold between the two spheres, that of the Formless and that of forms. It may be something similar as standing at the border of the ocean, still on solid ground, being touched now and then by its spray, breathing in its fragrance.

Some other talks of Sri Ramakrishna reveal to us two important points about the unity of the Absolute and Its sport.

He describes his spiritual experiences in the following way: 'The other day, when Harish was with me, I saw Satchidananda come out of this sheath (Sri Ramakrishna's body). It said: "I incarnate Myself in every age." I thought that I myself was saying these words out of mere fancy. I kept quiet and watched. Again Satchidananda Itself spoke, saying: "Chaitanya, too, worshipped Shakti."' (*Gospel*, pp. 646-7.)

At another occasion Sri Ramakrishna tells his disciples: 'The Divine Mother would put me in such a state that sometimes my mind would come down from the Nitya to the Lila (from the Absolute to the Sport) and sometimes go up from the Lila to the Nitya.'

After describing his different visions when his mind had descended to the Lila, he continues as follows:

'Then a change came over me. The mind left the plane of the Lila and ascended to the Nitya. I no longer enjoyed seeing the forms of God; I said to myself, "they come and go." I lifted my mind above them. I removed all the pictures of gods and goddesses from my room, and began to meditate only on the Indivisible Satchidananda — on that Primal Purusha. I myself remained in the state of a handmaid; — the handmaid of the Purusha.'

Satchidananda, a term which is generally used for the Formless, the Absolute, in an attempt to give us an idea of Its nature, this Satchidananda — the Absolute — is *seen* by Sri Ramakrishna coming out of his body, and moreover It *talks*, saying: "I am the Avatar of this age." This shows clearly how inseparable one were the two spheres for Sri Ramakrishna. The same impression we receive, when he describes how he was only absorbed in the Indivisible Satchidananda, but at the same time he remains in the state of the handmaid of the Primal Purusha. These descriptions transmit to us a slight idea that the Formless and Its Forms, the Absolute and Its Sport, are indeed inseparable one and that this unity can be realised though probably not by ordinary mortals.

The other important thing that we learn from Sri Ramakrishna's words in this connection is that he passed from the Nitya to the Lila, from the Lila to the Nitya and so on. This shows us that to be at the threshold of the two spheres is a floating state, preliminary to the blending of the two spheres.

That brings us back to the first lines of the above-mentioned song. For those who aspire to realise the highest Spirit in Its two aspects — with form and without form — this song may be of great help because it develops before us also a floating picture caused by the nature of the waves. Out of the Ocean of the Formless, its waves rising and falling in eternal sport, slowly a form takes shape. Just for a moment while they raise, we may get a faint glimpse of a divine form, a glimpse of eyes that seem to smile at us in causeless love. But still before we can distinctly see this subtle Form, It has dissolved already sinking back with the waves in the bottomless Ocean of the Undivided. And if we learn in the course of time to surrender completely to these waves they may carry us with them from the Lila to the Nitya, from the Nitya to the Lila, the Indivisible Satchidananda.

THE QUINTESSENCE OF VEDANTA PHILOSOPHY

(*Based on Vakya-Vritti of Sankaracharya*)

'BALU'

The easiest means for liberation from the bondage of transmigratory existence is the attainment of the knowledge that arises from sentences such as 'Thou art that' etc., and relates to the identity between the individual Self and the universal Self.

Who is the universal Self and who the individual Self? And how are they identical, and how is the identity proved by the mahavakyas?

He who questions 'Who am I?' is himself the individual Self; he is surely Brahman. The individual should recognise that he is an embodiment of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss, the witness of the internal organ and its modifications. The Self is not the body (gross) which is possessed of form etc. like jars and other things and also because it is a modification of ether and other great elements, like a pitcher.

Just as the seer of the jar is different from the jar, so also the seer of the senses is not the senses, and likewise, it is not the mind, not the intellect, not the vital force or praana; it is not the combination of the gross and the subtle either; nor is it the seen; it is quite distinct from the seen.

It is that owing to whose proximity non-conscious entities like body, senses, mind, vital force etc. appear to possess consciousness; it is identical with the changeless innermost Self which moves the body, makes the mind think 'I went elsewhere, now I am here' and so on; it is just like fire which makes a red-hot piece of iron look like fire; it is that which illumines the waking, dream and deep sleep states, and also the appearance and disappearance of intellect and its modifications. Just as a light within a jar is different from the jar, so also the Self which is the illuminator is different

The 'I' is one with the seer, the dearest of all, for whose sake other things exist (Atmanastu kamaya . . . . . priyo bhavati).

'Thou' is the sakshi, or witness whose nature is consciousness; witnessing is nothing but awareness on the part of the Self as one devoid of changes, such as birth, phenomenal existence, growth, passing from one state to another, declension, and destruction.

Now, what is 'That'? The negative 'Neti' method and the direct positive method are the two methods to ascertain this.

The universal Self is that which is free from samsara, which is neither gross, nor subtle etc., which is not the seen, which has not the qualities of the seen, which is free from darkness, which is the greatest of all bliss, which is the embodiment of existence, knowledge, which is defined as the Sat, which is all-pervading, and wellknown.

Brahman is the being which has been proved by the Vedas to be all-knowing, all-powerful and the supreme overlord of all. By knowing Brahman, nothing else remains to be known. Brahman is the limitless, of whom the universe is just a modification, just like the jar which is a modification of the earth which cannot limit the earth and which is nothing but earth.

Brahman is the object of search on the part of the mumukshus; it is that which has entered creation as individual souls and which is known from same sources to be their controller. It is the giver of the fruits of actions and is the motivator of the individual souls.

Now, we come to the identity of 'Thou' and 'That'. The meaning of the sentence is indivisible. In the sentence 'The lotus is blue', the blueness is in the lotus, and the lotus is qualified by the lotus, and there is mutual

a lotus with blueness and not vice versa. But in the sentence 'Thou art That', neither of the two constructions above is applicable; therefore, they are absolutely identical.

The apparent individual conscious Self is of the nature of bliss without a second and vice versa; therefore, the Brahman is the Self and vice versa. Hence, 'Thou art That'.

When this identity is known, the misconception that Thou means something other than Brahman, and 'That' means something mediately known disappears. Then, the individual conscious Self stands as the one all-pervading bliss without a second.

The sentences like Tattvamasi etc. are used to establish the identity of what are indirectly expressed by the two words 'Thou' and 'That'. The consciousness which is combined with the internal organs and which is the object of the idea and word 'I' is the direct meaning of the word 'Thou', and the qualified being, the cause of the universe, described as all-knowing and mediately known, possessing the nature of existence and having maya as its upadhi is the direct meaning of the word 'That'. So, in the sentence 'Tattvamasi, we find these two direct meanings for the two different words combined in one sentence; that is, on one and the same substance, two contradictory qualities are present, that is, the quality of being indirectly and directly known, and existence with a second and absolute oneness. So, only the indirectly expressed meaning has to be resorted to, namely that the meaning which is clearly intelligible by itself and connected with what is denoted directly.

For instance, in the sentence 'So ayam' or 'he is this', 'he' refers to past time, and 'this' refers to the present time; therefore, it involves an apparent contradiction. In explaining this sentence, we leave out from each of the words a directly expressed meaning, the idea of 'past' from 'he', and the idea of 'present' from 'this' and take it as one indivisible man having no connection either with the past or with the present.

Similarly, in the sentence, 'Thou art that', we leave out the part consistent with the internal organ and the reflection of consciousness from the direct meaning of 'Thou' and leave out the part consisting of maya and the reflection of consciousness from the meaning of 'That', and we get as the only possible meaning one indivisible entity which is existence-knowledge-bliss, having no connection either with maya or the internal organs or with the reflection of consciousness in either of them.

The study of the Vedas, contemplation over their meanings, and practice of control of internal organs, and other virtues are necessary to have a right and firm understanding of 'I am Brahman'. When knowledge becomes firm, the cause of the whole of this transmigratory existence is absolutely negated for ever. Such a person, with his gross and subtle bodies dissolved, freed from the subtle elements and released from the chain of actions becomes liberated immediately.

On the destruction of the bondage due to actions that have not begun to bear fruit, the man remains by force of those that have begun to produce them, liberated in life for some time, when he comes by absolute oneness, the greatest and ultimate bliss called the supreme abode of Vishnu, from which there is no return.

At the outset is enunciated the perception of the Self and of the non-Self by means, respectively of true knowledge and illusion. Thus does the Veda speak of the knowledge of Brahman as twofold, namely by means of experience relating to oneself (*Svanubhuti*) and by conclusive certainty (*Upapatti*). The former arises in correlation to bodily limitation, while the latter arises out of universality; at first springs up the experience, 'I am Brahman', and then, 'All this is Brahman'.

— Sri Sankara

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

Prof. P. Sankaranarayan is the Retired Professor of Philosophy, Vivekananda College, Madras. His article is the summary of two discourses delivered by him on 11th and 12th August, 1959 to a Seminar organized by the Christian Theological College, Bangalore on 'Contemporary Hindu Religious Movements'.

Sri A. J. Srivastava is Controller of Communication, Madras region, Civil Aviation Dept., Govt. of India.

Sri K. S. Ramakrishna Rao, M.A., is from Govt. College, Tumkur, Mysore.

Swami Nikhilananda's poem has been adapted from a Bengali song by Rabindranath Tagore.

Dr A. Narasinga Rao is Hon. Professor, Madras Institute of Technology.

Sri T. Krishnaji, Advocate, is from Madras.

Sister Savitri is a German writer and singer.

Sri 'Balu' is from New Delhi.

BEHIND THE CLOUD OF PROPAGANDA

In modern times propaganda has become the greatest moulder of public opinion. Its main support is the gullible human mind which believes a thing to be true if it is repeatedly told for a considerable time. In times of war it is said to be a normal method. The War is gone but the method persists. The effects of clouding the merits of an institution sheerly through propaganda may be seen now and then even on intellectual and otherwise well-informed minds. This feeling one has when one reads an axiomatic statement like the following :

> In its eagerness to build the character of the nation the Government has now commissioned the services of Himalayan sadhus a good number of whom left New Delhi on September 17 in a special train on a three-month 'character-building' tour of the country. This batch of sadhus, who are accompanied by more than five hundred people, most of whom women, would visit important religious, historic and developmental centres in the country. This spectacle brings to one's mind the old saying that everything would be topsy-turvy in the Kaliyuga which seems to be on the way to fulfilment. Otherwise why the sadhus should have left their meditations and have entered the field of practical politics by agreeing to serve as the vehicle of official propaganda. What is to be achieved by the sadhus? What particular lessons are the sadhus capable of instilling or are expected to instil into the people they visit? Is it ... sation? The sadhus as a class are a-social if not positively anti-social ; they are by nature parasitic living upon the dole or contribution of others. Under such circumstances what lessons can they impart to the people ?
>
> —*Vigil*, Sept. 26, '59.

We have nothing to say about the comments on the advisability of taking the help of the monks by the Government. There will be surely difference of opinion. But what seems peculiar is the casual but cocksure way of dubbing as parasite or anti-social an age-old institution honoured by thousands of people, disregarding all the services it renders to the society. It is true every religious institution requires to be justified nowadays. The institution of sadhus is sometimes attacked. But often there is very little of thinking behind these. A callous acquiescence to propaganda must be the reason, taking for granted the honesty and idealism of the writers. The Communists, of course, have ideological objections to religion itself and hence to all religious institutions. But open minds should not gulp without thinking whatever is dished out by propaganda.

There is no objection to the modern fad of judging everything from the social standpoint and on utilitarian grounds. Often we are

ervice from an institution. But to our estimation even from this standpoint the monks —even the old type monks — have a great social utility. The institution of monks points out some of the ideals to the society. Every ideal must have some experimenters in its fundamentals. The monks stand for the ideal of renunciation, self-immolation and devotion to God. Their mere presence will at least remind the people around that such virtues are necessary for society. Contact of such people elps man to be unselfish, to achieve mental quilibrium, to be comforted during ailments, bereavements and sufferings, thus making them nore fit to face life. With the coming in of he science of Psychology we do not hesitate o spend thousands of rupees for maintaining the psychiatrists. Then why should we grudge providing the wherewithals, that too the minimum, for the monks? Unworthy people are there in every group. Should we make capital out of it? Or, judge a tree by its unworthy fruits? It is improper to say that the monks are parasites. In that case all the non-productive professions will also be dubbed the same, as is actually done by the dialectical materialists. Moreover, a change of the pattern of service by sadhus is slowly gaining ground in India after the advent of Swami Vivekananda. Hence it is better, at least for the well-meaning persons, not to make uncharitable remarks and create doubt in the minds of people, thus undermining the prestige of a group trying to dedicate themselves to some higher principles.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

MANU DHARMA SASTRA: A Sociological and Historical Study by Kewal Motwani, 1958, Ganesh & Co. (Madras) Private Ltd., Madras 17, India. Price Rs. 20.

Dr Kewal Motwani is to be congratulated upon he most opportune publication of his *Manu Dharma Sastra*, which is mainly a sociological nd historical study. Time has really come when, o the enquiring world, our great classics should e presented in a form which appeals to the Modern Man and in terms which he can understand and appreciate. Such a work as Manu Dharma Sastra is essentially in a *sutra* form, originally preserved from the oral tradition and neant for scholastic purposes where the teacher s expected to elaborate the tenets of Manu with ll the wealth of his knowledge for the edification of his students. Tradition has not preserved what the teachers of various schools have said on the subject and the extant commentaries are but a poor substitute for it. As the greatest of thinkers, Manu holds a unique place in our literature, his teachings have stood the test of time and the fundamental truths incorporated in his work regarding the Indian Historical tradition, the constituent elements of Man, his social behaviour, the pattern of the idealistic society, the inter-relationship of Man and Society and *vice versa*, and the healthy social life are ageless in spite of the diverse theories and experimenta- text with the full bearing of its essential teachings and to present it in its re-oriented form is a very difficult task and Dr Motwani has done it in the most satisfactory manner.

Dr Motwani is a gifted writer, possessing a very agreeable style, capable of seizing upon the essentials out of a detailed mass of material and with a touch of imaginative genius of spinning out his own interpretation based on the teachings of Manu and its application to the present-day society. He always has a freshness of outlook in whatever he writes, as his little tract on *India's Ancient Literature* will indicate, and the magical charm of his style enchants the reader when an unexpectedly new vista is opened before his eyes. Though not a scholar of Sanskrit, his work is a standing monument to his industry, deep penetration and a very wide but selective reading. Opposed to the exhibitionism of a research scholar, he does not want to prove every single point with meticulous documentation. His role is that of an *Interpreter* of the ancient Indian Culture and it is enough for him if he does not deviate from the original text, in its most essential aspects, quoting his authority wherever necessary. We badly need such Interpreters of our National Wisdom, at this moment.

The book has been divided into two parts, the one treating the sociological aspect of the teaching of Manu and the other projecting the personality of Manu against the historical back-

ground across different ages and different climes. Consistent with his role, he has touched upon only those views which he wants to convey to his readers, although he has not failed to quote his authorities for the same It is possible to differ from his views and many of the historical details but, in our opinion, it is undeniable that he has substantially presented the Indian Case which, in due course, will find staunch supporters both among the Indians as well as the dispassionate scholars of the West. It will take some time before the Indian scholarship comes up to the level of the Western scholarship. Unfortunately, neither the Ministry of Education, Government of India, nor the Universities realise the importance of a broad-based specialisation in the various aspects of Indology, co-ordination among scholars, frantic efforts to equip our libraries from research point of view, liberal endowments, scholarships and travelling purses to competent scholars which is the *sine qua non* of research in the West. It is these facilities that enable the Western scholar to make first-rate contribution to the world stock of knowledge. Bereft of all these, a serious-minded patriotic Indian has to wend his weary way, single-handed, and without any help of any kind because he dislikes the present ways and means of currying favour with the authorities and their advisers in the Ministry, Universities and Trusts of all kinds. He has to remain content with whatever sheaf he can lay his hand on in the gathering, although he sees a great harvest before his eyes! Dr Motwani also has suffered from want of these facilities. If Government could spare half the amount which is disproportionately spent on flimsy spectacles and *tamashas*, Indian scholarship will come to be respected by Western scholars and the glorious past of the ancient Indian civilisation will be unravelled by the indefatigable efforts of our scholars, successfully refuting the erroneous western theories regarding the relative lateness of India's past and the consequent linguistic theories which are so rampant to-day. Beginning with the story of Creation, it is now tentatively possible to enmesh the missing links to a certain extent with the aid of archaeology, linguistics, ethnography and other related sciences. The various historical documents, so far unearthed, *throw a flood of light on events which are contemporaneous with the ancient Sumerian, Assyrian, Chaldaean, Egyptian and Minoan civilisations. The history of our ageless civilisation, thus presented in the most scientific manner, will have many psychological, political, social and ideological repercussions, in the old as well as the new* world, the extent of which cannot be determined at this stage. India has won her freedom and time will come when she will vindicate her past with a view to building up a Kingdom of God on this earth, in the living present and in the more hopeful future.

Dr Motwani, in the first part of his work, has dealt with all the important aspects of Manu Dharma Sastra and his first chapter on "Ideological Foundations" is a masterly presentation of Indian Culture in general and Indian Sociology in paritcular. He has eschewed all the laborious details while treating of our Educational Institution, the Family Life, the Political Institution, Religious Life and Social Stability and Progress in an inimitable manner explaining fully the basic ideology and its social and cultural significance which no other scholar has ever done before him. No doubt he stands as one of the pre-eminent spokesmen of our culture to the West, though in a restricted field of India's past and its undying social fabric which has stood its ground when other societies and civilisations have perished in the dust.

In the second part of his work, Dr Motwani traces the world-wide influence of Manu on the ancient societies and their law-givers, in a general way. The panoramic view of the ancient histor[y] unfolded by him, depending upon various authorities, has no doubt contributed to work up an hypothetical possibility of the indirect influence of Manu's teachings but one stands unconvinced of the claims made by our author in this respect. The fact is that in treading upon the ground of ancient history, where no interlinking is possible for want of documentary evidence of such a great antiquity, he has found himself in the vortex of all kinds of controversies. The scope of this part of his work is so vast and so ambitious that the summary disposal of controversial issues on esoteric grounds would not appeal to a common reader who demands factual presenta[-] tion and documentary proof. It is possible that the other side may have an equally eloquent advocacy and then the entanglement becomes deeper. He has no doubt raised many an important question like the Sanskrit chronology, the basic idea of the Manvantara system and its confirmation by modern science, the history of the migrations of the Aryan peoples in every part of the globe, East, West, North and South, tracing the influence of Sanskrit in all these regions, and consequently of Manu also, which deserve careful consideration. It is also possible to supplement his information at many places in order to substantiate his point of view but it requires

points involved. Instead of congesting his material within a space of about 170 pages, it would have been better if he had projected a special volume for this most important and enthralling study and done full justice to the different aspects of the qusetion.

This is certainly not the place to enter into any controversial discussions regarding the historic role of Manu as Law-giver. We sincerely feel greatly obliged to our author for having produced his *chef-d'oeuvre* on Manu which will remain as a standing monument to his intrinsic ability, gift of imagination, a far-sighted vision, deep and penetrating study and above all an elevated and charming style which carries everything before it and leaves the reader in the land of enchantment!

DR R. G. H.

THE HEART OF EMERSON'S JOURNALS: Edited by Bliss Parry. (Dover Publications. Inc. 180, Varick Street, New York 14. Pp 357. Price $1.85).

This is the first one volume collection of the personal diary — 'the hasty and informal writings' — of Ralph Waldo Emerson, which he started to compile when he was seventeen and finished off when he was seventy-two. He was one of the 'greatest thinkers of his age, and a contemporary of the mighty minds of his times, Wordsworth, Tennyson, Carlyle, Landor, Coleridge. Pen pictures of these personalities, lie strewn in, which attest to his keen powers of observation, and judgment. His opinions and views on various matters have been expressed in these pages, frankly — wit and wisdom run through every one of them; and his excursus into religion and philosophy show his catholicity and sense of world brotherhood.. The strains of Hindu thought are discernible in his mental make up: and it is pleasing to note that he had Sanskrit literature in mind, when he said that he wished 'his life were 3000 years long whenever he read a good book' (p. 315).

He was American to the core: yet he had been its relentless critic, even of its best and at its best. 'The salvation of America and of the human race depends on the next election' (p.240). 'Wordsworth, Coleridge, Tennyson, Carlyle and Macaulay, cannot be matched in America' (p. 262). 'If Socrates were here, we could go and talk with him: but Longfellow, we cannot go and talk with. There is a palace, servants, wine and coats' (p. 264). 'America should affirm and establish that guns should not ... of the perfect right' (p. 315). 'Wealth will vote for rum, tyranny and slavery' (p. 266). 'America is a vast know nothing party' (p. 278). 'You complain the Negroes are a base class. Who makes them and keeps them so but you?' (p. 319). 'America has immense resources but it is a village littleness' (p. 220). 'Judge the country by the minority. The mass are animal, in a state of pupilage' (p. 267).

On modern civilisation and its attitude towards things spiritual and secular, he had his own views which were expressed frankly and unequivocally. The extracts given below display the wide range of his intellect and mental powers. 'The human mind cannot be burned or bayonetted nor wounded' (p. 296). 'To be out of war, out of debt, and out of the dentist's hands — what an alleviator is sleep, which muzzles these' (p. 307). 'The only poetical fact in the life of thousands is their death' (p. 182). 'The blazing evidence of immortality is our dissatisfaction with any other system' (p. 270). 'The religions are obsolete when the reforms do not proceed from them' (p. 337). 'The Bible wears black cloth, comes with a certain official claim against which the mind revolts' (p. 311). 'In sceptical hours, when things go whirling astronomical facts make for sublime peace' (p. 125). 'All writing is by the grace of God'. 'We are apt to overstate the importance of our actions. Give yourself no anxiety about events, about the consequences of actions. There is another Director, Controller or Guide' (p. 39). 'The whole object of the universe is the formation of character.' 'It is right to ask God's blessing on us, to enumerate our wants, our sins, even our sentiments to the unseen Idea. There has been no man who never prayed' (p. 31). 'Material beauty perishes. Intellectual beauty limits admiration to seasons and ages, has its ebbs and flows. But moral beauty is lovely, imperishable, perfect' (p. 16). 'I would freely give all I ever hope to be, to do good to posterity, in a golden way' (p. 16). 'There is one distinction amid the fading phenomenon, which is eternal and real — the distinction between Right and Wrong'. 'What do I mean by morals? I cannot define. It is man's business to observe and the definition must be the slow result of years and lives' (p. 80). 'Miracles have ceased. Have they indeed? Pick up that pebble at your foot. Tell me what fiery inundation of the world gave this stone its shape? .... Where is the manufactory of this air, so thin, so blue, so restless, which eddies round you?' (p. 118).

Emerson was no man of religion in the conventional sense of the term, but a more devout

prayer to the Almighty had not been uttered than the one on the eve of his engagement to Ellen (p. 42); 'I have been for days engaged to Ellen. Will my Father in Heaven, regard us with kindness and as He hath as we trust, made us for each other, will He be pleased to strengthen and purify and prosper and eternise our affection?'

S. RAJAGOPALAN

REFLECTIONS ON THE TALKS WITH SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI: By Mr S. S. Cohen. (Published by the Manager, Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai, S. India. Pp. 180. Price Rs. 4.)

This is an abridged edition of the author's well known 'Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi,' which were a redaction of the substance of the conversations with and the observations by the Great Seer. These, rightly classed as 'gems', are noteworthy as much for their simplicity and rationality, as for the liberal use of homely and apt similes and metaphors, illustrating great metaphysical doctrines, with a naivete and accuracy which are amazing to a degree.

Bhagavan Ramana was no philosopher in the technical sense nor had schooling in any system. Indeed, his was one of experience; and as Mr Cohen correctly observes (p. 170), 'realisation came to Him long before He had contact with any philosophy or doctrine. The result was that when He much later recounted his experiences in the ordinary language, the learned among the listeners, found them to be identical with Sankara's philosophy'. The Maharshi's doctrine is a logical consummation of Sankara's monism of 'Aham Brahma Asmi', and fitted in also with the theory of Gautama Buddha that the integration of the individual soul with the Ultimate Reality was a matter for individual experience. Sri Ramana himself has said (p. 160) that the 'whole Vedanta is compressed in the two Biblical statements, "I am that I am: Be still and know that I am God"'.

The book under review could quite accurately be styled as a text book of Sri Ramana's philosophy. The author has adopted the method of the commentators on the Brahma Sutras; and his notes on each of the sayings of the Maharshi are erudite and lucid, surcharged throughout by intense devotion and dedication. It could have been no easy task to weld together utterances made on different occasions and contexts, to various types of people and present them as a connected narrative and exposition of a metaphysical system which on his showing, appeals both to the head and the heart. Perhaps the best tribute to this extremely valuable treatise is that it has succeeded in indicating not only the core of the Bhagavan's teachings but their practicability and adaptability even in the humdrum existence of modern life.

Faith in God and in His Omniscience, is implicit in the Maharshi's system; and the Bhakti cult could not have had a more ardent champion. 'Recognise the force of the Divine will', he warns an enthusiast, 'and keep quiet. There is no need to let Him know your needs. He knows them Himself and will look after you' (p. 61). 'Every action is prompted only by Him' (p. 65). 'One must continuously and unceasingly think of Him' (p. 31). 'The Creator knows how to take care of His creation' (p. 58). 'Divine Grace is essential for realisation. But this grace is vouchsafed only to him who is a true devotee or yogin, who had striven hard and ceaselessly for freedom' (p. 117).

'Sat Sang' is essential for the aspirant. 'Grace is necessary. God, Grace and Guru are synonymous. Sadhu Seva is meant only for it. Just as a physically weak man comes under the control of the stronger one, so does the weak-minded come easily under control in the presence of the stronger-minded' (p. 119).

A few other quotations might be made, which illustrate the various facets of the Bhagavan's philosophy.

'Re-birth does not happen, if you cease to have desires', (p. 24). 'Give up actions which are Bandha Hetu and cultivate those which are Mukthi Hetu' (p. 31). 'Brahmacharya is not calibacy alone, but finds bliss in Brahman which is the self' (p. 45). 'The simple man is satisfied with japa and worship. The trouble is with the book worm' (p. 75). 'There is no man who even for a trice fails to experience the self'. 'The Self is the Heart. When asked who you are, you place your hand on the right side of the chest and say I am. Unknowingly you point on the Self' (p. 104). 'Mouna is not closing the mouth. It transcends speech and thought' (p. 113). 'Vow of silence is helpful, but what is the good of keeping the mouth closed and letting the mind run riot. Nothing is as good as Dhyana' (p. 115). 'By Pranayama, the mind will be only temporarily quiescent, because the tendencies are still there. If the mind is transformed into the self it will no longer give trouble. That is done by meditation' (p. 154). 'External contacts make the mind restless. Vairagya is the first step. Then introspection and concentration follow, ending in Samadhi' (p. 120). 'Vairagya and Abhyasa bring about

templation' (p. 150). 'A child and a Jnani are similar. The interests of the child in things end with the things. So also, in the case of the Jnani' (p. 169). 'The look of the Jnani has a purifying effect. Just as a piece of coal takes long to be ignited, a piece of charcoal takes a short time, but a mass of gunpowder is instantaneously ignited, so it is with grades of men coming into contact with the Mahatma' (p. 168).

The book needs to be translated into the various regional languages, so as to enable the teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi reach a wider public

S. RAJAGOPALAN

SRIMAD VISHNU-TATTVA-VINIRNAYA OF SRI MADHVACHARYA: By S. S. Raghavachar (Publisher: The President, Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Mangalore) 1959. Pp. XXI, 98. Price Rs. 3.

Srimad Vishnu Tattva Vinirnaya is the most important among the *prakarana granthas* of Sri Madhvacharya who is a violent and uncompromising critic of Advaita Vedanta. An absolute realist that he is, Sri Madhva affirms the doctrines of five eternal differences, of the undeniable reality of the world, of Vishnu as the Supreme Reality and of the need of propitiating Him to obtain His grace for attaining salvation. In this work of 464 sections, he sets out his doctrines in pithy statements controverting the cardinal tenets of Advaita like abheda, anirvachaniya-khyati, ajnana, maya etc., and advances his own interpretations of Sruti passages commented on by the Advaitin in support of his position. Sri Madhva buttresses his arguments by quotations from a number of not-so-well-known Upanishads. Without embarking upon a consideration of Sri Madhva's arguments, it may be pointed out that this work brings them together in a compact and concise form and focusses attention on the Realist's objections to Advaita. The dispute between the Dvaitins and the Advaitins, which dated from Sri Madhva's time has gone on down the centuries and very sharp intellects have participated in the fray. These doctrinal disputations have not resulted now-a-days as in other times in vanquishing and annexing the opponents. If they have served any purpose, it is only to make each party state his position with greater clarity in the light of the criticisms offered and to deepen faith in one's own position. This is all to the good if the debate is conducted without acrimony or rancour. In fact controversy is the whetstone of conviction.

From this point of view, publications of the kind under review are to be welcomed. Sri S. S. Raghavachar has taken upon himself to bring out these works with the very laudable purpose of laying before his readers the contributions of differing thinkers on the metaphysical problems. This is his second publication, the first being Sri Ramanuja's *Vedartha Sangraha*. This book gives the text of Sri Madhva's work in Sanskrit following each section with an English translation which while retaining the conciseness of the original keeps faithful to it. Swami Adidevananda in his *Foreword* and the translator himself in his *Introduction* have provided a summary of the fundamentals of Dvaita philosophy which will be useful in following the text. It is to be hoped that this book will be followed by another setting forth a full exposition of the criticisms pithily conveyed in it. The printers, the Sharada Press, Mangalore are to be congratulated on the excellence of their work.

P. Sankaranarayanan.

SANSKRIT

SUGAMA: By Swami Sri Saccidananda Sarasvati. Pub. Adhyatma Prakashana Karyalaya, Holenarsipur (Mysore). Pp. 16-115. Price Rs 1.50.

The *Adhyasa Bhasya* ,forming the introduction to Shankara's commentary on the Brahma Sutras, occupies a very important position in the Adwaita dialectics. The Acharya expounds therein the concept of *adhyasa*, illusory superimposition, which accounts for the apparent reality of the empirical world in this Thought. Number of scholars have since taken up this topic and discussed it threadbare. The present work of Swami S. Sarasvati, a fresh commentary on Shankara's *Adhyasa Bhasya*, is a notable addition to the literature on the subject and will be welcomed by all lovers of Sanskrit and the Vedanta.

As the title suggests, this work expounds in simple and understandable language the postulate, the objections and their weaknesses, and the inevitability of the Doctrine of Adhyasa with its attendant implications, closely following the text of Shankara. The author, who is an authentic interpreter of the Adwaitic tradition today, draws upon *Sruti*, Scripture, but at the same time presses into service the arguments of Reason. The style is elegant and direct though the method of elucidation is happily traditional.

M. P. PANDIT

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA, KHAR

REPORT FOR 1957-58

The Mission celebrated Durga Puja and Anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda with great eclat. Religious classes were held in various parts of Greater Bombay and also outside the city. The Free Reading Room and Shivananda Library is equipped with more than 8,000 books and 70 dailies in different languages. 4,400 books were issued and a good number of readers utilized the Reading Room every day. 80 students were admitted in the Home, out of which 65 appeared for their College and University examinations and 41 passed. The Charitable Hospital has Ayurvedic and Allopathic Dispensaries as well as an Indoor ward to accommodate six emergency cases, an Operation Theatre, X-Ray Department, Pathological Laboratory and Gynaecological, Ophthalmic and Dental sections. During the period under review, Earth Quake Relief in Kutch was conducted by the Bombay centre. Milk powder was distributed to poor children and adults. The Managing Committee thank the supporters and contributors and appeal to all to contribute liberally to enable the centre to progress with its noble services.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION CALCUTTA STUDENTS' HOME

REPORT FOR 1958

At the beginning of the year there were altogether 85 students, of whom 47 were free, 13 concession holders and 25 paying. But in the end the number came to 86 of whom 54 were free. Pecuniary help was given to 58 students belonging to several colleges towards their examination fees. There were 3,000 well-chosen books and 13 journals and 6 dailies in the library. 925 books were issued during the year. From the text book section, 749 copies were lent to the inmates. As usual ex-students are showing good interest in the maintenance of the Home. A technical institution, called the Ramakrishna Mission Shilpapitha, for 540 students was opened in July. While thanking the supporters and sympathisers the management appeal for generous contributions.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, CHINGLEPUT

REPORT FOR 1957-58

The Chingleput Branch runs a Boys' High School, a Girls' High School, an Elementary School for Boys and Girls, a Boys' Residenti[al] Home (Hostel) and a small Printing Press. There were 17 teachers and 400 boys in the Boys' High School and 10 teachers and 256 girls in the Girls' High School in the year 1958. In the Elementary School there were 257 boys and 194 girls and 14 teachers. The Boys' Residential Home is a Paying Boarders' Hostel attached to the Boys' School. Prayer, study, work and games are in the daily routine of the inmates. It is proposed to put up a three storeyed building consisting of a kitchen, a dining Hall and about 12 decent rooms. The Printing Press was inaugurated in 1955 with a very modest equipment to get the printing work required for the institutions. The Managing Committee express their heartfelt thanks to the well-wishers, and supporters and donors and appeal for donations.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA, JALPAIGURI

REPORT FOR 1958

During the year under report 20,156 patients were treated in the Charitable Dispensary, of whom 6,255 were new cases. The maternity and child welfare centre had 133 expectant mothers in the indoor hospital and 4,198 were visited in the house. Milk was distributed to 50,3[..] children and 10,120 mothers. The Students' Home had 15 boys in the Ashrama. The Harijan School and Night School had 28 and 22 students respectively. 2,825 books were issued from the library. Holy birthdays were celebrated as usual and religious discourses were regularly given. While thanking the sympathisers the management appeal for funds for the Students' Home and specially for the incomplete temple.

Unselfishness is more paying, only people have not the patience to practise it.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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Great Master

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